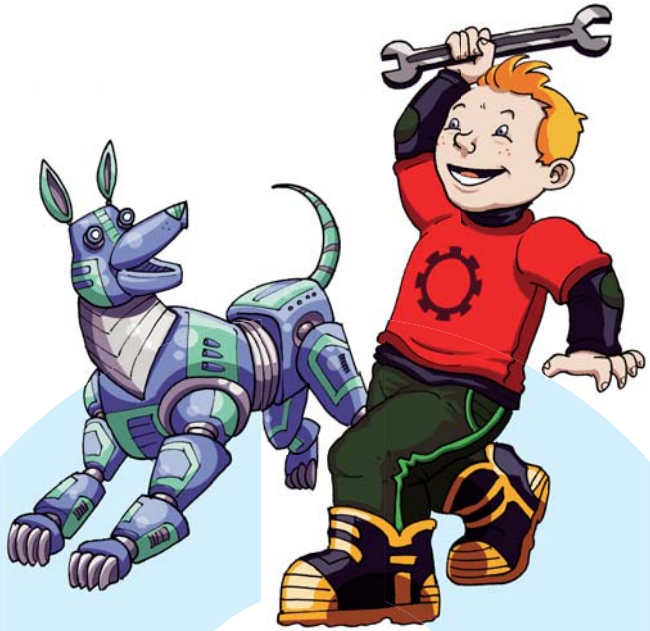
FREEMARKET



FREEMARKET
by Luke Crane and Jared A. Sorensen

THIN SLICING
Peter Adkison, Luke Crane, Paul Peterson and Jared A. Sorensen

CULTIVATION
Carly Bogen, Wilhelm Fitzpatrick, John Harper,
John Stavropoulos and the very forgiving staff
of Hidden City Games

BREAKING
Daniel Heacox, Thor Olavsrud, Rich Forest, Radek Drozdalski
and Alexander Newman

EPHEMERA
Rebekah Bennington, Manning Krull, Christopher Moeller,
Paige Pumphrey, Daniel Solis and Jordan Worley

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WELCOME TO THE DONUT

We are a society of functionally immortal, cybernetically modified, telepathic infovores. Our culture is centered on a reputation-based economy in which all basic needs—sustenance and shelter—are accounted for. If you wish to do more than just survive—if you wish to create, perform, build or destroy—you must win the approval of your friends and the community at large.

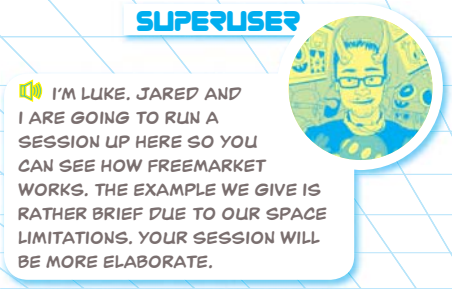
Our "community at large" is currently over 80,000 strong. It is contained in a Stanford Torus-style space station parked at the L5 Lagrange point of Titan and Saturn. Our habitat was designed to hold 40,000 comfortably. We've modified it to accommodate our expanding numbers. There are no laws in our society, yet there is also no crime and no death. So we think we're doing a fair job.

You are now one of us. Welcome!

WHAT DO YOU DO IN UTOPIA?

Offmarket folks always ask us, "What do you do up there?" They can't imagine how one would live in utopia. Just like you, we have families, passions and hobbies. And while we don't labor to earn money for food and housing, we each have a cause, a philosophy or a purpose to which we dedicate ourselves. We do what we love and we're very passionate about it. Sounds like a nice life, eh?

Now that you're one of us, you're going to join a group of like-minded individuals and you're going to energetically pursue your agenda. You're going to build technologies, create ideas and probably step on


SUPERUSER
I'M LUKE. JARED AND I ARE GOING TO RUN A SESSION UP HERE SO YOU CAN SEE HOW FREEMARKET WORKS. THE EXAMPLE WE GIVE IS RATHER BRIEF DUE TO OUR SPACE LIMITATIONS. YOUR SESSION WILL BE MORE ELABORATE.
JARED
HI. I'M GOING TO ENJOY THIS FROSTY BEVERAGE WHILE LUKE DOES ALL THE WORK.
RAY
WHILE JARED AND LUKE ARE RUNNING THE DEMONSTRATION, OTHER USERS LIKE ME WILL POP IN WITH ADVICE AND COMMENTS.

a few toes. You're going to earn recognition and favor from your friends and, we hope, from the rest of the station.

Of course, station resources are limited—particularly space—so not every idea or dream can be brought to fruition. Therefore, users spend their reputations to ensure that their ideas are produced, seen or heard. With 80,000-odd contestants, the competition for status and resources is intense.

FREEMARKET JARGON

Before you go on, there are a few terms that we use on the station with which you're unfamiliar. We'll give you a brief rundown here so you'll be better prepared for the instructions and guidelines that follow. This should be enough to get you started.

Flow: Flow is the name of our reputation-based economy. It's our currency, sort of.

MRCZ: This acronym is pronounced "mercy." MRCZs are ad hoc groups formed for specific purposes.

Key: A key is a nanological digital interface implanted into the nervous system of every user. It allows communication with the station and other users. It monitors your health and your flow. It runs all of the software you need to interact with station technology.

Aggregate: The Aggregate is the friendly computer that helps us run this place.

FREEMARKET STATION

A Quick Tour

Imagine a spoked wheel over three and a half kilometers wide. In the center is a zero-g hub of research labs, docking stations and engineering platforms—the Hole. Eight spokes radiate from the hub, tethering it to a massive ring. Above this floats a giant mirrored disc, focusing and re-directing sunlight to the inner rim of the wheel. A long spindle juts out from the bottom of the hub. Affixed to this, is the communication relay's array of lasers and antennae. The wheel is surrounded by an immobile wall made from lunar concrete: the mass shield. This shield protects the residents of the wheel against heavy ions, cosmic radiation and micrometeorites.

This is FreeMarket Station.

The space station rotates at 0.69 revolutions per minute, allowing for Earth-like gravity—though the gravitational pull decreases as one moves toward the Hole. High above, light filters in through angled mirrors and quartz glass windows set facing the inside of the ring. There is no east, west, up or down. There is spin and antispin, in and out. While the ground seems flat enough, gazing spin or antispin offers a dizzying view of the wheel's curve.

Travel to and from the Hole is handled via the spokes. Trams carry passengers and technology

back and forth with ease. In the ring itself, above-ground traffic is reserved for pedestrian travel, smart cars and a maglev rail that runs along the inner circumference of the ring.

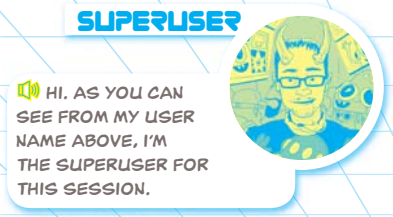
The walls and floor of the ring are meters thick, to allow for easy transmission of energy, water and waste throughout the station. Water is reclaimed, garbage is recycled, and toxic waste is scrubbed clean and repurposed as bricks of reusable matter. Even airborne particles like dust are collected and recycled using biological vacuum cleaners affectionately named "dust bunnies."

FreeMarket Station contains a compact metropolis of 83,679 human beings. The original structure was meant to house 10,000 people in spacious comfort, with large swaths of agricultural space, parks and natural elements such as lakes, rivers and forests. The surprising abundance of space and efficiency in resource management prompted an overhaul, raising the practical population limit to 40,000. With the advent of printing technology and other innovations, this limit was doubled to 80,000. We transformed the station from pastoral dream to urban wonderland. But the one thing we can't make more of is space; we're a bit cramped up here.

Housing is wildly divergent, both in scale and in form. Age-old cultural styles and modern fashions converge and mutate, creating an eclectic jumble of aesthetics. Some MRCZs flaunt their wealth and status with whole structures built from smart materials. Others subsist as literal hangers on, living in scrap metal domes welded to titanium stanchions and epoxy moorings. The idyllic apartments and roomy domiciles of science fiction novels are quaint notions here. To an outsider, much of FreeMarket looks like a chaotic urban cluster echoing Manhattan, Hong Kong and Rio de Janeiro.

Because of the short distances and dense habitation, FreeMarket has the air of a busy neighborhood rather than a sprawling metropolis. Remain in one place long enough and everyone you know will pass by and ping you. You'll frequent your favorite cafe, or loaf about in your capsule, meeting with clients while you finish projects on your to-do list, all without antiquated tech like a screen, mouse or keyboard. Using your key, you squirt data to your MRCZ mates, design new tech to print later, ping a friend to synchronize your calendars or view thousands of news and gossip feeds. And if you grow tired of your surroundings, you can wander over to a fresh, phase-III location custom-built that day and start all over again.

Welcome to your new home.



FREEMARKET SESSIONS

FreeMarket is played in sessions. A session lasts from two to four hours and accommodates one to five users. In order to get started, one of you must elect to be the superuser for this session; the rest of you are users. This arrangement can change in the next session, but for now it stands.

The users all create unique profiles and form a group—a MRCZ of their own. The MRCZ will then confront rivals and other problems in an attempt to gain individual and collective recognition.

The first time a group sits down together, the superuser walks the users through the profile creation process. If this is your very first time on the station, the superuser will also walk you through a challenge before starting the session in earnest. Otherwise, after each user has generated a profile, the superuser presents the users with a challenge to overcome. They are challenged to effect a small change on the station, increasing their status and reputation.

Bolstering your rep is never as simple or as easy as it sounds. Good luck!

THE ONE RULE

Now that you're aboard, we should tell you the one rule we have. If you want to leave the station at any time, all you need to do is ask. We'll give you a lifeboat and send you anywhere you want. But you can't come back, ever. We burn out your key and keep lots of tricky biometrics on file so that we'll always know you if you do come back.

Most new arrivals are shocked by life on the station; it's never quite what they expect. Many will request deportation, but after some initial bumps, some remain to lead productive lives. We hope you'll want to stay.

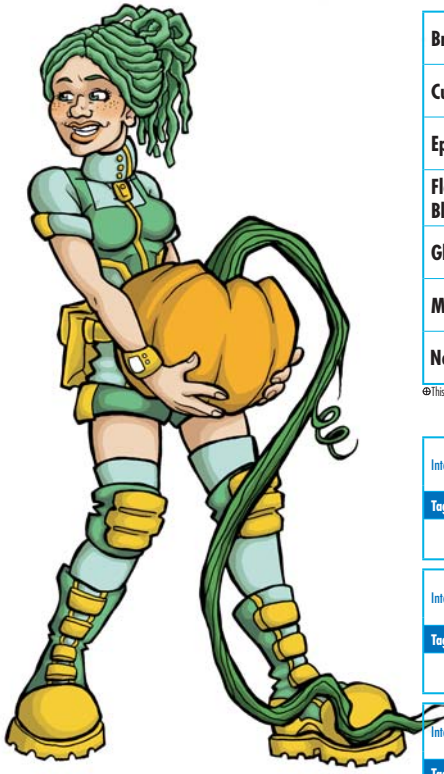
CAT PEOPLE AND COMPUTER BRAINS

Despite our advanced science and technology, we haven't been able to figure out how to make cat people or sentient and sapient robots. We discovered that when you put a consciousness in a non-human shell—like an animal or a robot—it ceases to be human. Rather, it becomes what it is, inhuman. And history has given us a term for when a human becomes inhuman: It's called "crazy."

The robots you meet on the station are smarter than your average bearbot, but they're not alive. I hope you're not disappointed. And while we print out all sorts of strange nanological animals to play with, we can't load your consciousness into one. It's tantamount to murder, and it's cruel to the animal.

More importantly, we'd get a frownie for it, and our flow hasn't been too good lately. We spent most of it creating this document.

SAMPLE CHARACTER



Key ID: TERA CHAPMAN
User Name: JARED

Clade: PRECOCIOUS SPACE FARMER
Generation: 2ND GEN
Geneline 2 Experience 5 Interface 2 Technology 1

PERSONAL FLOW	
Starting	Current
12	

Outstanding Frownies

GENELINE

Geneline Name: APPLESEEDER — 2

Tags (Choose 3): GREEN THUMB | COMMON SENSE | PLUCKY

EXPERIENCES

Breaking		Printing⊕	
Cultivation⊕	2	Recycling⊕	1
Ephemera		Shaping	2
Flood/ Bleeding		Social Engineering	
Ghosting		Switching	
Mobbing⊕		Thin Slicing⊕	
Negotiation⊕		Wetwork	

⊕This symbol indicates that this experience earns a one-time flow bonus for the character and his MRCZ

INTERFACE

Interface Name: AGRONOMIST'S DATABASE — start 1 — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience: CULTIVATION | GROWING SEASONS | COMPREHENSIVE

Interface Name: PHOTOSYNTHETIC HAIR — start 1 — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience: SHAPING | VEGETATION | CALMING

Interface Name: — start — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience:

TECHNOLOGY

Tech Name: GERMINATOR — start 1 — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience: CULTIVATION | MECHANICAL GNOME | HELPING

Tech Name: — start — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience:

Tech Name: — start — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience:

Tech Name: — start — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience:

Tech Name: — start — current
Tags (choose 3) // One tag must be an experience:

CHALLENGES

1) Initiate challenge; pay flow
2) Describe goal for challenge
3) Initial draw of two cards plus bugs
4) Activate either geneline or experience
5) Choose and describe action: go for it, engage tech, support, burn, recalibrate or call
   5.1) Starting with the target, take actions in turn until someone calls
6) Total points (see table at right)
7) Determine winner
8) Spend margin of victory on effect and efficiency

SCORING POINTS

	Always counts as 1 pt
	1 pt when geneline is activated
	1 pt when experience is activated
	1 pt when tech is engaged
	No points scored when drawn

PERSONAL DATA

DATA 0	MRCZ and MRCZ LOGO or INSIGNIA
FRIENDS	GARDEN PARTY

MEMORIES

A memory must include three of the following five concepts: person, place, object, MRCZ or action. Starting memories: yesterday, life-changing and creation/childhood.

Long-Term Memories

RAFE FROM THE MISSING FOUNDATION DECOMPILED MY GARDEN WITH A ROBOTIC GROUNDHOG.

I HELPED MY MOTHER, CYNTHIA, CAN PEACHES HARVESTED FROM THE AEROPONIC ORCHARDS.

Short-Term Memories

I TALKED TO THE HISTORIAN LENIN MERENGUÉ ABOUT THE ORIGINAL GARDEN PARTY.

Download full-sized profile sheets at projectdonut.com or use the pad provided in your intro pack set.

GENERATION

WHO ARE WE?

On the station you are listed, categorized and rated in 11 ways: key ID, user name, clade, generation, geneline, experience, interface, tech, memories, flow and MRCZ. These 11 elements are called your user profile. This section walks you through the process and shows what each element means to you.

Key ID

The key ID is your unique name on the station. Your key ID appears in the Aggregate registry. It's your handle.

Names on FreeMarket are as individualized as its residents. An infant is named by his parents, but he can change his name upon emancipation. A blank is named by the individual who printed him. An immigrant is free to keep his birth name or create a new one when he registers his key. A resident's name is unique and is displayed when pinged by another resident.

Original Names

The Originals hailed from twenty-first century Earth and had names based on their linguistic, cultural and national identities. The Originals' surnames were family names as opposed to modern genelines. Example names: Radosław, James, Qiong, Gregor, Wilma, Irina, Saif, Taro, Graham, Adelmo, Jürgen, Sjon, Guy, Jayesh, Parvin and Leona.

First Generation Names

As the children of the Originals, the first generation freemers followed the traditional naming conventions of their parents. Cross-pollination of language and ethnicity aboard FreeMarket created a melting pot of identities. It was common for a European geneline to have members with names of Korean or Arabic origin and vice versa. Non-standard English names, such as Forest, Star and Ocean became prominent as well, both due to the establishment of English as a common language and as a reminder of Earth's distant natural wonder. Example names: Drozdal, Ford, Hugo, Isao, Antonella, Pete, Lucas, Summer, Mkembe, Sol, Zodiac and Magnus.

2nd Gen Names

The 2nd genners are the true natives of FreeMarket and have adopted the most extreme, colorful and atypical names. Free of linguistic and cultural restraints, their names sound more like nicknames, handles or military call-signs than proper names. Some use a smattering of alpha-numerics, others use anagrams, palindromes or portmanteaus to craft a unique identity. One 2nd genner went by "Interrobang" after his original choice of "?!" was rejected by the Aggregate. Example names: Froz, Estrella, Leah, Opal, Stan!, Wernick, Megan the Vegan, Sandman, Squixel, Io, Vespa, Chromedome and Atom.

Blank Names

Blanks are artificially created human beings. During their inception, blanks were considered to be novel life-forms, similar but not identical to their human inventors. The idea of a designed human having its own identity was a foreign concept. Bowing to pop-culture ideas about clones and artificial life, many blanks were given alphanumeric designations such as Audrey-II or Mark-5. This quickly fell out of fashion. These days, the blanks are afforded the same status as biologically-cultivated infants. Names are chosen by the adopted parents and these choices are predicated on emotional, genealogical and personal preferences. A first generation "parent" will often give the blank a first generation name; an immigrant parent will most likely give the blank an immigrant name. Example names: Dro, Chiodo, Ntropy-210, Sjon Se7en, Constantin, Bull, FourYou, NewSierra, Astrid and Khan.

Immigrant Names

Immigrants' names are similar in nature to the names of the Originals and their offspring. Cultural mores play a huge part, as does the place of birth. An early nationalist movement by lunar colonists prompted widespread use of ancient Greek names, while the settlers of the Garuda L5 Orbital have names derived from Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and other languages common to the Indian sub-continent. Renaming upon arrival at FreeMarket Station is a rite

of passage for many immigrants. As such, immigrants looking to reinvent themselves often choose a name based on FreeMarket's popular culture. Example names: Radek, Shilo, Pericles, Jitender, Miko, Omar, Ezekial, Jagruti and Fiorella.

User Name

This is your real name: Abby, Jared, Luke, Thor, Mayuran, etc.

Clade

Clade is the basic idea of who you are and what you do. FreeMarket is a hypermodern place, full of people who make, trade, fix and share. The station is always in need of upkeep and maintenance, so there are lots of engineers, recyclers and designers. There are thousands of groups with different ideas about life on the station, so there's always room for evangelists and negotiators. There aren't any formal laws on the station, but we still have a minority of users who lie, cheat and steal. Or as we'd say: socially engineer, shape and ghost. Who are you? What do you want to do?

Generation

There are four generations of FreeMarket residents: first generation, 2nd gen, blanks and immigrants.

First Generation

This generation was the first to be born in Saturnian space, on the station or in the lifeboats used as transport to the station. The first generation is almost as old as the station itself, about 35 to 46 years. Their parents, the Originals, are all gone now. Either they fled the thing that they created or succumbed to the rigors of life in space before technology was developed to extend their lives.

The first generation are more conservative than their children—culturally and technically. Their genelines have only been modified slightly and they use a minimal amount of cybernetic interface. They are, however, well versed in the station's operations and its attendant technology.

2nd Gen

2nd gen are the kids and grandkids of the first generation. These people have no memory of life anywhere but on FreeMarket. Their grandparents are slow, gray, fading shades. The swirling ebb and flow of life on the station is more real to them than strange concepts like mountains, oceans, arcologies and open sky. They live by a spinward and antispinward compass, a massive solar mirror, fluctuating gravity and the curve of the station's hull.

These high-speed station monkeys undergo substantial geneline modification, carry a suite of cybernetic interfaces and know station life backward and forward.

Blanks

Blanks aren't clones. They're not robots or androids; they're not grown in vats. Blanks are organic bionetic constructs extruded from three dimensional matter printers. They're complete, living bodies produced to specification. Memories and experiences are loaded into them during the printing process—technically the label "blank" is a misnomer. There isn't a cooler full of soulless bodies on the station. Each blank has to be carefully programmed and implanted with memories and experiences at the cellular level.

Originally, blanks were only used as replacement bodies, but now folks just print 'em and flood 'em. Blanks are full-fledged, fully vested members of station life. They're as human as you are.

Immigrants

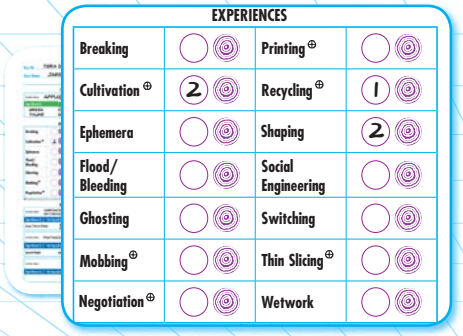
The fourth generation of freemers aren't really a generation at all. They are immigrants—those who weren't born here, but who came in search of escape, utopia, a new life in the off-world colonies or something else.

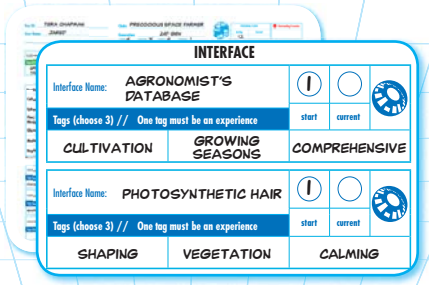
Life on the station is unlike any other human habitation in the system: Liberty Station, Mars or Earth. The other stations are all alike; we're the odd duck. It takes seven years of hard travel to get out here. And we can only accept a few immigrants at a time due to overcrowding. But still they come, making the journey to the promised land. The shocking truth behind immigration is that 97.34% of immigrants are deported less than a week after their arrival on the station. But about 2.66% manage to adapt and call this place home. We welcome them. They bring fresh memes to our little community, laden with a touch of Old World thinking that we all find kind of hilarious.

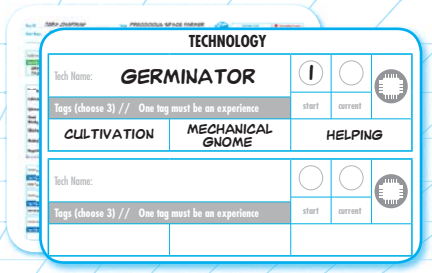
Geneline

As the study of human biology progressed to genetic science, we discovered that genetics are pretty darn important. This is old news, but on the station we put a lot of stock in geneline. We tinker with it, modify it, adapt it and customize it. We exhibit traits from parents and forebears, but add our own hand-built modifications.

As you might imagine, once we had the ability to tinker with the human genome to add predictable trait expression, we went a little wild. First thing we learned: turns out that you can't make someone part animal. Apparently, your physical make-up is inextricably tied to your mental faculties. So people with fur, tails and ears don't act "feline"—that's an anthropocentric view. They just go bonkers, so we don't do that. On the positive side, it turns out that we can add traits from movie stars, pop stars, historical figures and even characters from books. Nowadays,







we don't even know what's natural expression or evolution and what's a custom-hacked trait. It sure keeps life interesting.

Experience

All activities on the station that aren't handled by the Aggregate and other automations have been broken into 14 categories: breaking (hacking), cultivation (making stuff from old world parts), ephemera (creating art and ideas), flood/bleeding (memory hacking), ghosting (stealing and sneaking), mobbing (cybernetic modification), negotiation (making deals), printing (programming matter printers), recycling (repair), shaping (manipulating with body language), social engineering (manipulation with words), switching (Aggregate hacking), thin slicing (making split-second judgments) and wetwork (violence). We call them experiences.

Each user has some experience in one or more of these areas. And if you don't have an experience, you can always learn as you go.

Interface

We all have nanomachines implanted in and attached to our nervous system. They are a cybernetic interface that enable us to survive in our augmented reality. Our basic interface—everyone on FreeMarket has one—is the key: a neurodigital interface containing a communications suite, a personal locator beacon and heads-up retinal overlays. It tracks your flow and health. Without it we couldn't live on the station.

That's just one example of an interface. Users have all sorts of interfaces to augment their geneline, experience and technology.

Interface mitigates the hazards of station life through augmentation and error-correction.

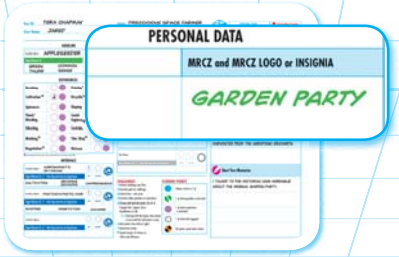
Tech

Tech permeates life on the station: gadgets, robots, exotic food, tools, pets, rayguns, mimetic clothing, monofilament katanas, software upgrades and a whole lot more. Everyone uses tech. Not everyone has tech. Tech breaks down and burns out. Tech is traded and gifted. It's a barter currency in station life.

Memories

Memories are vital to existence on the station. Life is important to remember, but it slips past so quickly. And our impressions of life's fast-spinning events are what make us unique.

Of course, your brain can be hacked and your unique memory stolen. That doesn't make you any less unique, though. Or does it? I forget.



Flow

Flow is represented by a tally of points. As a new user, your flow is based on your generation and how productive your experiences, interface and tech are.

Without flow, a user can't initiate challenges with other users. A user with high flow is powerful and influential—sought after as a friend and supporter. But flow fluctuates. Someone fat with flow today could be baselining tomorrow. Such is the carnival ride of life on the station.

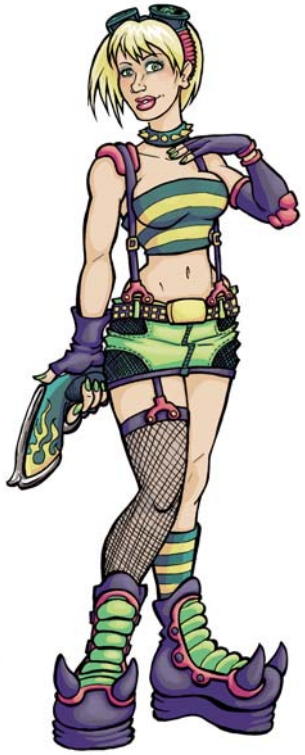
MRCZ

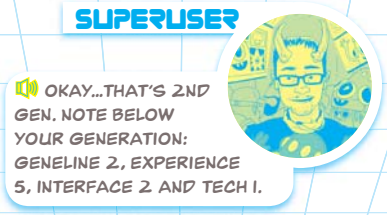
In order to build the station and jump-start the culture, the Originals formed ad hoc groups awkwardly called Multinational Regional Cultural Zones. They were interdisciplinary groups designed to bring various specialists together to fulfill immediate or short-term goals and needs—for building, maintaining or enhancing the station.

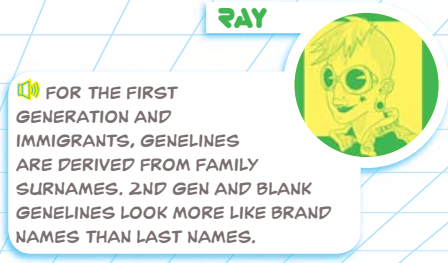
Forty years later we still use those groups, but mercifully they're called MRCZs. To us, a MRCZ is just a social group that shares resources in service of a common goal or philosophy.

These groups no longer exist solely for the purpose of building or maintaining the station. MRCZs now form because their members all share the same beliefs, enjoy the same food, want to design and distribute a product, want to spread a certain message or even because they're all in the same geneline.

Not everyone has to be in a MRCZ, but being a member has benefits. You get to move out of the capsule dormitories and into a small living space—usually a recycled cargo container. You get private access to station resources like matter printers. You get access to better data feeds, and more comprehensive reversible death benefits in the rare instance that you're killed. So if you're smart, you join or form a MRCZ.






RAY
FOR THE FIRST GENERATION AND IMMIGRANTS, GENELINES ARE DERIVED FROM FAMILY SURNAMES. 2ND GEN AND BLANK GENELINES LOOK MORE LIKE BRAND NAMES THAN LAST NAMES.

BECOMING ONE OF US

There are 10 steps to becoming one of us. You must populate the following fields of your user profile: clade, generation, geneline, experiences, interface, tech, MRCZ, memories, flow and key ID. The previous section described what those elements mean. This section details how to go about inputting that information into your profile.

1 Who Would You Like To Be?

Try to imagine yourself on FreeMarket. Who would you like to be? What do you do? What group are you a part of? Boil that idea down into a clever description and write that on the clade line of your profile.

SPACE FARMER, EX-MARTIAN PHILOSOPHER, CAREER COACH, DEATH ARTIST, WALL-CRAWLING NINJA HACKER, AND NOIR DETECTIVE ARE ALL VALID IDEAS!

If you're about to come aboard the station with some of your friends, talk about your ideas together as a group. Build on and support each other.

2 What Generation Are You?

You can be first generation, 2nd gen, a blank or an immigrant. Which generation are you? Write it on the generation line of your user profile. After you've decided, consult the table below:

GENERATION	GENELINE	EXPERIENCE	INTERFACE	TECH
First Generation	1	4	1	4
2nd Gen	2	5	2	1
Blank	3	3	3	1
Immigrant	1	2	2	5

On your profile, underneath your generation, there's a space to copy these numbers. Note the number in each column listed with your generation.

3 Design Your Geneline

Your geneline has a name, a rating and three tags. You can pick one of the prefabricated genelines listed in the Geneline chapter of this book or you can design your own.

Geneline Name

Your geneline's name is a clever word or short phrase that describes the line. Write its name in the box for Geneline Name.

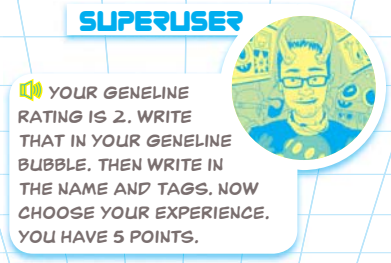
PIKEA, CÉSAR, TITANIUM WHITE

Geneline Rating

Your geneline rating is in your generation's geneline column of the table in step 2. Copy that number into the bubble next to your geneline name.

Geneline Tags

A tag is a short descriptor that summarizes one of your qualities. Everything on the station is tagged, even you. Tags help us to better


SUPERUSER
YOUR GENELINE RATING IS 2. WRITE THAT IN YOUR GENELINE BUBBLE. THEN WRITE IN THE NAME AND TAGS. NOW CHOOSE YOUR EXPERIENCE. YOU HAVE 5 POINTS.

JARED
HM...FOR FARMING, I NEED CULTIVATION. I'LL PUT 2 POINTS THERE. RECYCLING IS REPAIR? I'LL PUT A POINT THERE. AND I LIKE HOW SHAPING SOUNDS. I'LL PUT MY LAST 2 POINTS THERE.

process information. Giant chunks of info—like your genome, for example—are broken down into grokkable key words for which anyone can search.

Geneline tags can describe a physical quality, mental ability or personality quirk.

PERHAPS TWO FACETS ARE INHERITED FROM YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER, ALONG WITH A THIRD TRAIT THAT SETS YOU APART FROM BOTH OF THEM.

Geneline tags are very important. If one of your geneline tags relates to a challenge, then you can use your geneline in that challenge.

Note three tags under your geneline name. Geneline tags can be just about anything you can think of but they may not be one of the 14 experiences.

FEARSOME, BRAVE AND LEADER; PATIENT, KIND AND RESILIENT; DEMONSTRATIVE, HIRSUTE AND PUNTER.

Designate Your Experience

Your generation gives you a number of experience points. Assign those points to any of the 14 experiences. You do not have to assign a rating to an experience if you don't want to. An experience cannot have a rating higher than 3. In brief, the 14 experiences are:

Breaking: Breaking reduces the rating of tech or interface through hacking or sabotage.

Cultivation: Cultivation creates old-world technology.

Ephemera: Ephemera influences short-term memories through art, music or philosophy.

Flood/Bleeding: Flood/bleeding hacks the brain to alter, remove or implant long-term memories.

Ghosting: Ghosting allows you to duck sensors and security so you can move unseen on the station.

Mobbing: Mobbing creates new and repairs burned-out interface.

Negotiation: Negotiation is used to form binding contracts through the ancient art of deal-making.

Printing: Printing creates tech using matter printers.

Recycling: Recycling repairs burned-out or broken tech and creates new tech by merging extant pieces.

Shaping: Shapers manipulate others through subtle use of body language.

Social Engineering: Social engineering is used to force another character through verbal cues and misdirection to do or reveal what he otherwise would not.

Switching: Switchers swap identities of users in the Aggregate.

Thin Slicing: Thin slicing is used to determine the value or validity of information through gut reaction assessments or cool-hunting.

Wetwork: Wetwork damages or destroys bodies and temporarily removes a user from play while his body is repaired or regrown.

The Challenge section breaks down each experience in great detail.

SUPERUSER

NOW ON TO INTERFACE. THEY'RE KIND OF LIKE CYBERNETIC IMPLANTS. WHAT DOES YOUR SPACE FARMER HAVE? TRY TO BUILD STUFF THAT AUGMENTS YOUR EXPERIENCES.

JARED

I WANT FARMING SOFTWARE USED FOR CULTIVATION AND... CRAZY HAIR THAT HELPS MY SHAPING. I HAVE 2 POINTS, RATING 1 FOR EACH. I'LL CALL THE SOFTWARE THE "AGRONOMIST'S DATABASE KEYSOFT." TAGS: CULTIVATION, GROWING SEASONS AND...COMPREHENSIVE. MY HAIR IS PHOTOSYNTHETIC AND COMPOSED OF VEGETATION. IT HAS A CALMING INFLUENCE.

RAY

I'M A THIN SLICER. I HAVE A BIAS SUPPRESSOR INTERFACE. IT HELPS ME SEE MORE CLEARLY.

5 Build Your Interface

Robotic arms, pheromone projectors, internal guidance mechanisms, nanological supercomputers, improved firmware and even body weaponry are all considered interfaces. Interfaces are biomechanical devices implanted in your body that enhance your control over your own body or grant electronic control over other external technologies.

Each interface has a name, a rating and three tags. In user profile creation, you may use your interface points to buy up to three interfaces, points permitting. Using your points, rate your interfaces from 1 to 3.

You may choose from our list of interfaces in the Interface chapter or you may design your own. If you choose from our stock list, note the name and tags in the appropriate location on the user profile. Assign the interface a rating of your choosing, remembering to abide by the rating and tagging restrictions.

Interface Name

If you're designing your own interface, make up a snazzy name for it. If you can, incorporate a model or designer.

WILDCARD SEARCH KEYSOFT, AGRONOMIST'S DATABASE OR SETAE IMPLANTS.

Interface Rating

The points you assign to an interface become its starting rating. Interfaces are rated from 1 to 3. Interface rating determines how many times you can use your interface in a challenge and how much punishment your interface can absorb before it burns out.

The starting rating is modified in play when your interface is damaged or mobbed. The modified number becomes your current rating.

Interface Tags

Interface tags are similar to geneline tags: They are short descriptions of the implant's functionality.

The first interface tag must be one of the 14 experiences: breaking, cultivation, etc. The interface can only be used in challenges pertaining to that experience.

THIN SLICING, CULTIVATION OR GHOSTING.

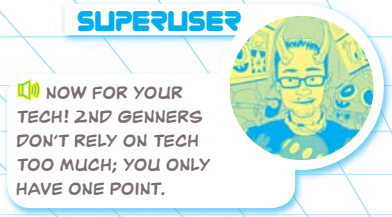
The second interface tag describes the form of the interface.

AGGREGATE REGISTRY, PLANT CATALOGUE OR MICROFIBERS.

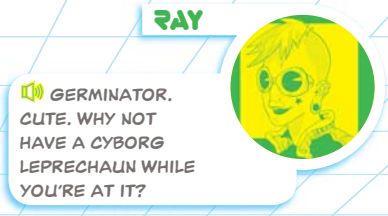
The third interface tag describes a notable quality of the interface's function.

RAPID, COMPREHENSIVE OR ADHESIVE.

The tags tell the superuser and other users whether or not your interface applies to a



JARED
I'LL HAVE A ROBOT THAT PREPARES SEEDS FOR PLANTING. ITS NAME IS "THE GERMINATOR." TAGS: CULTIVATION, MECHANICAL GNOME, AND HELPING.



challenge. Most of the time, if the experience applies, then the interface applies. But sometimes the other tags tell us that, due to the situation, your interface doesn't apply.

6 Build Your Tech

Robots, rayguns, pumpkins, aerodynes, matter printers, universal tool kits and even pet monkeys are all considered technology on the station.

Technology is any object that is manufactured or grown to aid a user. Technology is categorized by its application to one of the 14 experiences.

You may have up to five pieces of technology at any one time. Each piece of tech is rated from 1 to 3.

You may choose tech from the Aggregate's database or you may design your own. If you choose from our stock list, write the name in the Tech Name box. Assign the tech a rating using the points in your generation's tech column. Write the tech's tags in the tag boxes.

Tech Name

If you're designing your own tech, think of a cool name so it can be differentiated from other similar tech on the station.

TOOLBOX, ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE OR FLAMING PANDA QUAD SKATES.

Tech Rating

Spend your generation's tech points. Each piece of tech may be rated from 1 to 3. Your rating determines how many times you can use your tech in a challenge and how many times it can be damaged or burned out.

Tech Tags

Tech tags are similar to interface tags. The first tech tag must be one of the 14 experiences: thin slicing, wetwork, etc. The tech can only be used in challenges pertaining to that experience.

RECYCLING, SHAPING OR EPHEMERA.

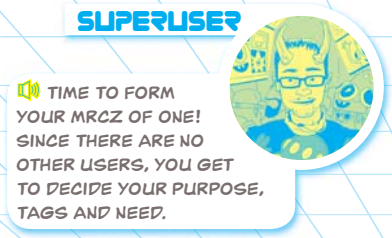
The second tech tag describes the form of the tech.

WRENCHES AND STUFF, PHARMACODYNAMIC OR SPEED SKATES.

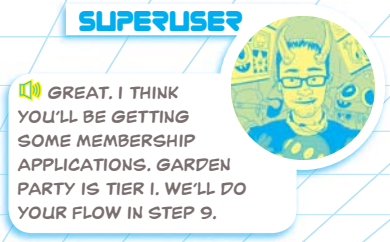
The third tech tag describes a notable quality of the tech's function.

OLD FASHIONED, CALMING OR SUPERFAST.

The tags tell the superuser and the other users whether or not your tech applies to a challenge. Most of the time, if the experience applies, then the tech applies. But sometimes your other tags tell us that, due to the situation, your tech doesn't apply.



JARED
I WANT TO REFORM THE GARDEN PARTY. OUR PURPOSE: "TO SUPPLY FRESH PRODUCE TO FREEMARKET." TAGS: CULTIVATION, PRODUCE AND...GIGANTIC. I NEED: TECH, LAND AND MORE MEMBERS.



7 Join Your MRCZ

Because you're smart, you and the other users are going to form a MRCZ to get started on the right foot. All starting users are part of the same MRCZ.

When creating your MRCZ, choose one user among you to write down this information on the MRCZ profile.

What Is Your MRCZ's purpose?

Discuss why you're all together in a group. Nothing you've said so far is set in stone, so feel free to make adjustments so everything makes sense. Work hard to find a common cause. Be creative.

Write your MRCZ's purpose in the form of a statement.

WE MAKE SHINY HAPPY PRETTY THINGS THAT WALK CRAWL AND FLY; BREAK DOWN THE SOCIAL STRATA THAT KEEPS US SEPARATED AND MAINTAIN THE BALANCE OF POWER; OR WE KNOW WHAT'S COOL, YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING UNTIL WE DO.

What Are Your MRCZ's Tags?

Your MRCZ has tags like your geneline, interface and tech. Choose three terms to describe your MRCZ. What are three things that your MRCZ does well? What are three services that your MRCZ offers?

MRCZ tags can include any of the experiences, whether shared by the members or not. MRCZ tags should be colorful descriptions of the MRCZ's best qualities.

EPHEMERA, ROBOTICS, ANTIQUE; BREAKING, ANARCHY, SUBVERSIVE; OR THIN SLICING, NEOPHILIA, TRENDY.

What Does Your MRCZ Need?

Think of three things you don't have that your MRCZ needs. Tie these into your MRCZ's purpose and tags.

PRINTING, INDEPENDENCE, SPONSORSHIP; SOCIAL ENGINEERING, EXPLOSIVES, GRAFFITI; NEGOTIATION, DATA, AD SPACE.

MRCZ Tier

Your fledging MRCZ starts at tier 1. There are seven tiers. Each tier is progressively more privileged and more influential. See the MRCZ chapter for the rules on how to advance your tier.

MRCZ Name

Think of an interesting, attention-grabbing name for your new group.

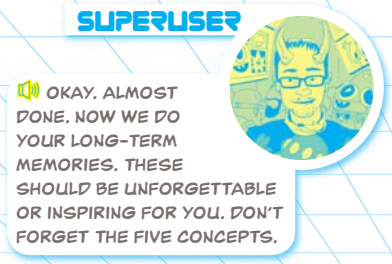
LEAH'S WONDERFUL WONDERS; MISSING FOUNDATION; OR PANTHER MODERNS.

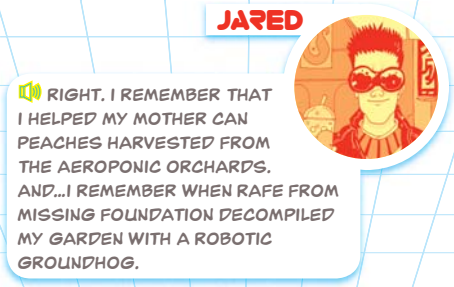
MRCZ Flow

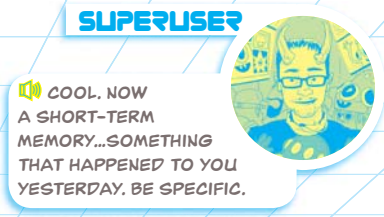
MRCZs have a flow rating. We'll factor that in step 9, Flow.

MRCZ Profile

One user should fill out and maintain the MRCZ profile.


SUPERUSER
OKAY. ALMOST DONE. NOW WE DO YOUR LONG-TERM MEMORIES. THESE SHOULD BE UNFORGETTABLE OR INSPIRING FOR YOU. DON'T FORGET THE FIVE CONCEPTS.


JARED
RIGHT. I REMEMBER THAT I HELPED MY MOTHER CAN PEACHES HARVESTED FROM THE AEROPONIC ORCHARDS. AND...I REMEMBER WHEN RAFE FROM MISSING FOUNDATION DECOMPILED MY GARDEN WITH A ROBOTIC GROUNDHOG.



Memories

Memories are perhaps the most valuable commodity on the station. They can be turned into experiences, traded or even converted into data.

Memories are divided into two categories, short term and long term. Short-term memories are gathered in the moment, as you explore the station, interact with other users and engage in challenges.

Long-term memories are short-term memories that have stuck with you. They're meaningful moments from your past or important instances from recent events.

Each user starts with two long-term memories and one short-term memory.

Starting Long-Term Memories

Recall two important memories from your past. These memories could be a formative moment from your early development: a defining moment in your professional or personal life; or a bizarre, unique, unforgettable circumstance in which you were involved.

Write these memories in the slots provided under long-term memories. When writing them, include three of the five following concepts: a person, a MRCZ or group, a place, an object (or piece of technology) or an action.

The "person" cannot be yourself. When describing these concepts, be specific. Name them.

DON'T TELL US, "WHEN I WAS YOUNG, A MAN HIT ME ON THE HEAD WITH A STICK." TELL US, "WHEN I WAS YOUNG, MY FATHER, PIETRE, KNOCKED ME UNCONSCIOUS WITH A HYDROSPANNER AND DUMPED ME INTO A ZERO-G TRAMWAY TUBE."

These are memories that have stuck with you. You remember them clearly.

Starting Short-Term Memory

Something unusual or revelatory happened to you yesterday. Tell us what it was. Write it down as a short-term memory.

Use the same format as for long-term memories. Include three of the five following concepts: a person, a MRCZ or group, a place, an object (or piece of technology) or an action.

Be specific and detailed in your account. Name names!

Flow

Flow is social capital—standing, reputation and face on the station. Flow is spent to buy into a challenge, to leave a MRCZ or to defriend someone. It is gained from cooperation, fulfilling contracts, donation, admiration and friendship.

SUPERUSER
GREAT! NOW FOR YOUR FLOW. YOU ARE 2ND GEN (8 FLOW) AND GET AN EXTRA POINT EACH FOR CULTIVATION AND RECYCLING PLUS ONE POINT FOR INTERFACE AND TECH TAGGED WITH THOSE: 12 PTS!

JARED
12 FLOW, IS THAT GOOD? IT LOOKS LIKE MY MRCZ FLOW IS 12 PLUS TWO FOR THE CULTIVATION TAG: 14. THAT SEEMS LIKE A LOT. OH, AND MY KEY ID IS "TERA CHAPMAN."

Your generation gives you a base starting flow. Your experiences, interface and technology give you bonuses to that base.

- First generation starts with 10 flow.
- 2nd gen starts with 8 flow.
- Blanks start with 5 flow.
- Immigrants start with 3 flow.

Add one point to your base for each of the following experiences you have: cultivation, mobbing, negotiation, printing, recycling and thin slicing. These experiences are marked with a station symbol on your experience list for easy identification.

Add one point for each interface or piece of tech you have that is tagged with one of the above listed experiences.

Starting MRCZ Flow

Starting MRCZ flow is equal to the lowest flow of its current members.

IF YOU'RE STARTING A MRCZ WITH THREE OF YOUR FRIENDS AND YOUR FLOW RATINGS ARE 3, 12, 7 AND 9, YOUR MRCZ STARTS WITH 3 FLOW BASE.

Add a bonus for each MRCZ tag listed on the table on the right.

Key ID

Please tell us what your name is on the station.

You're done. Let's go!

MRCZ Tags	Bonus
Negotiation	+3
Recycling	+3
Thin Slicing	+3
Cultivation	+2
Mobbing	+2
Printing	+2
Breaking	+1
Ephemera	+1
Flood/Bleeding	+1
Ghosting	+1
Shaping	+1
Social Engineering	+1
Switching	+1
Wetwork	+1
Other	+0

CHALLENGES

Life on FreeMarket is full of challenges. You live in a space donut stuffed with 80,000 people all vying for fame, recognition, success and satisfaction. We tend to get in each other's way as we scramble to attain our goals. This chapter teaches you how to participate in, win and lose challenges.

On FreeMarket, you initiate a challenge when you want to build something, destroy something, change something, hide something, reveal something or force another user to do something he would not do otherwise.

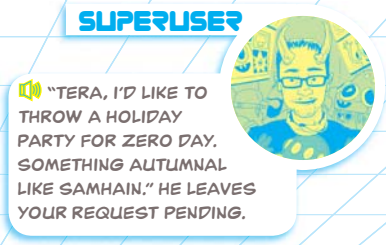
Challenges change minds, create technology and leave smoking craters. Challenges produce results.

How do you get in on that action? Well, there are a few necessary components and a handful of steps to take.

You need at least one user and a superuser, but you can have up to four users and a superuser. Each user gets a challenge deck. The superuser gets one, too. You need a stack of bugs. You need a tech deck. And, most important, each user needs flow. You have to risk some flow in order to initiate a challenge. The amount of flow varies depending on the type of challenge, but the range usually stretches from 1 to 50 points.

SUPERUSER
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE A GIRL. ANYWAY, YOU'RE IN YOUR TINY LITTLE MRCZ—A RECYCLED DRAINAGE PIPE. LENIN MERENGUÉ PINGS YOU.

JARED
THANKS—A RECYCLED DRAINAGE PIPE. SO, A FEW DAYS AGO, I PLANTED AN AVOCADO PIT IN WATER. I'M WAITING FOR IT TO SPROUT. I RESPOND TO LENIN, "HEY, WHAT'S UP?" I ALSO SEND HIM A FRIEND REQUEST. I NEED THE FLOW.


SUPERUSER
"TERA, I'D LIKE TO THROW A HOLIDAY PARTY FOR ZERO DAY. SOMETHING AUTUMNAL LIKE SAMHAIN." HE LEAVES YOUR REQUEST PENDING.

CHALLENGE DECK

There are 45 cards in a challenge deck, divided into four types: experience, geneline, FreeMarket and hazard. There are 10 each of the experience, geneline and FreeMarket cards. There are 15 Hazard cards. In a challenge, you draw cards to score points.

Shuffle and Shuffle Not

When you first sit down to play, shuffle your deck and set it next to your user profile. Once you begin to draw from the deck during challenges, don't reshuffle until you've gone through the whole deck. Place cards used in challenges in a discard pile next to the unused cards.

Once you've run through your whole deck, shuffle your discard pile and reset your challenge deck.

TECH DECK

You'll also need the tech deck. It consists of 20 cards, half hazard, half tech. Everyone shares the tech deck, so place it in easy reach of all the users.

Place used tech deck cards in a separate discard pile. Once you've run through the deck, shuffle the discard pile and reset the tech deck.

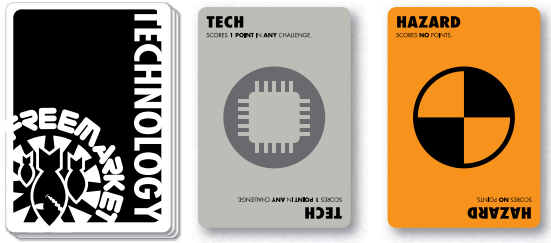
BUGS

You'll also need a stack of bugs. Bugs are given to the loser of the challenge. You get one for each hazard card in the winner's hand, but we're getting ahead of ourselves. We'll talk more about bugs, hands and losing a bit further on.

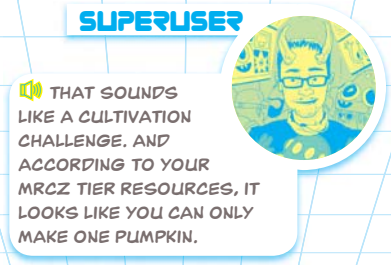
challenge deck

x10 x10 x10 x15

tech deck



x10 x10


SUPERUSER
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A CULTIVATION CHALLENGE. AND ACCORDING TO YOUR MRCZ TIER RESOURCES, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU CAN ONLY MAKE ONE PUMPKIN.

SAY AND SPRAY IT

The materials are all laid out and ready. Now what? Well, you've talked up a storm. You and the superuser have gone back and forth describing the action. Now you really want to do something. It's simple: Tell the other users and the superuser what you want to accomplish in the action.

> I WANT TO: CREATE A PET MONKEY; DEATH ANGUS SMERSH; PERFORM MUSIC THAT MOVES THE CROWD TO TEARS.

Those are challenges.

Superuser Quiz: Name That Challenge!

When a user declares that he's going to print something, death someone or grow a pumpkin—when he's going to change something on the station—it's your job to tell him what type of challenge it is.

Consult the Specific Challenges List

In order to adequately perform your duty, you'll need to familiarize yourself with the list of challenge types presented later in this chapter. Challenges fall into one of 14 categories. These happen to correspond with the experiences listed on the character sheet, so this information isn't anything secret or new.

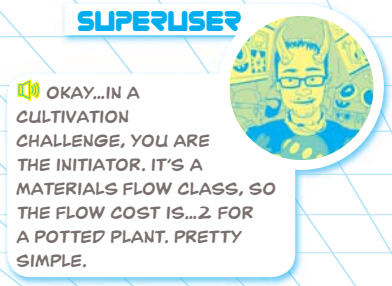
> CREATING A PET MONKEY IS A PRINTING CHALLENGE. TRYING TO DEATH SOMEONE IS A WETWORK CHALLENGE. PERFORMING IS AN EPHEMERA CHALLENGE.

On FreeMarket, in order to keep the station running, we need to use the right tool for the job. We don't use wetwork to convince someone to lend us a cup of sugar; that's what social engineering and negotiation are for. We don't use thin slicing to make music; that's what ephemera is for. And we don't use cultivation to combat rampaging robots. That's a job for a wetworker or a breaker.

CHALLENGES ARE FOR WINNERS

Challenges are meant to be overcome and won. You want to use challenges to score lots of points and grind your opponent into the recycler. Winning challenges gets you fame, fortune and flow.

In a challenge, two sides compete. Participants match their abilities to cards drawn from the challenge and tech decks in order to score points and overcome the other side. In the end, the side with the most points wins.


SUPERUSER
OKAY...IN A CULTIVATION CHALLENGE, YOU ARE THE INITIATOR. IT'S A MATERIALS FLOW CLASS, SO THE FLOW COST IS...2 FOR A POTTED PLANT. PRETTY SIMPLE.
JARED
RIGHT. I'LL SPEND 2 FLOW TO MAKE THE PUMPKIN. NO PROBLEM. MY CURRENT FLOW IS 10, DOWN FROM 12.
PERSONAL FLOW
Starting
Current
12
10

INITIATING A CHALLENGE

After you've determined what type of challenge you're diving into, there are two more steps needed to set it up. They're very simple.

Initiator Versus Target

Who started this challenge? That player is the initiator. He uses the abilities in the "Initiator Uses:" section listed under each individual challenge heading. Either the superuser or a user can initiate a challenge.

The person or entity being challenged by the initiator is the target. This isn't rocket science, right? Sometimes the target is another user, sometimes it's the superuser. When it's the superuser, the target is a resident, a sweep or the difficulty of the challenge at hand. The target's job is to resist, defend and stop the initiator. That's it.

IN A PRINTING CHALLENGE, THE USER IS THE INITIATOR; THE SUPERUSER IS THE TARGET. IN A WETWORK CHALLENGE, THE PERSON ATTEMPTING TO DO HARM IS THE INITIATOR. THE VICTIM IS THE TARGET. WITH EPHEMERA, THE TARGET IS NOT THE CROWD, BUT THE USER'S SELF-DOUBT, SHYNESS AND AWKWARDNESS.

Many Targets, Many Initiators

Can you have more than one target in a challenge? Yes. Can you have more than one initiator? Yes. Users can gang up on the superuser, double team each other or team up with the superuser in a challenge. See Group Challenges at the end of this chapter for the details. For now, we're going to give you the basics of how to run a one-on-one challenge. Group challenges follow the same rules with a few tweaks.

The Flow Must Flow

Once we know who initiated the challenge and who or what is being targeted, it's time to ante up the flow.

There are three classes of flow cost for a challenge: material, targeted or Aggregate.

- For a material-class challenge, your flow investment is based on what you're trying to create: There's a table of costs in the Flow chapter.

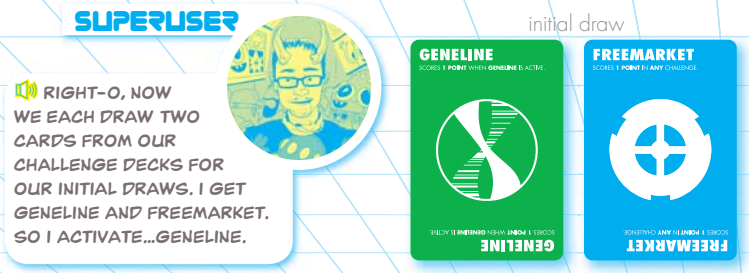
PRINTING IS A MATERIAL CHALLENGE.

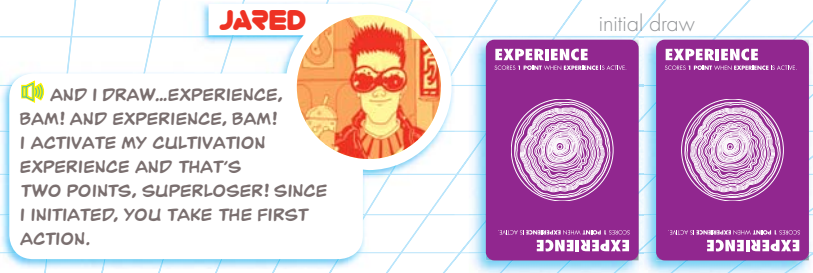
- For a targeted challenge, your flow investment is set by the target. The target may set the initial flow investment as high as, but not exceeding, his current flow.

WETWORK IS A TARGETED CHALLENGE. EPHEMERA IS A SUBSET OF THAT, A SELF-TARGETED CHALLENGE.

- For an Aggregate-class challenge, the player must risk 50 flow.

The flow class is described with each specific challenge. There's no guessing to be done, just look it up.


SUPERUSER
RIGHT-O, NOW WE EACH DRAW TWO CARDS FROM OUR CHALLENGE DECKS FOR OUR INITIAL DRAWS. I GET GENELINE AND FREEMARKET. SO I ACTIVATE...GENELINE.
initial draw
GENELINE
FREEMARKET


JARED
AND I DRAW...EXPERIENCE, BAM! AND EXPERIENCE, BAM! I ACTIVATE MY CULTIVATION EXPERIENCE AND THAT'S TWO POINTS, SUPERLOSER! SINCE I INITIATED, YOU TAKE THE FIRST ACTION.
initial draw
EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCE

PLAYING A CHALLENGE

Draw, Partner

Once the target and the initiator have invested flow, everyone in the challenge draws two cards from their challenge decks. Place the two cards face up on the table in front of you.

The cards placed in front of you during a challenge are your "hand."

Activate

Based on those two cards, everyone activates an ability: either your geneline or a specific experience in which you are ranked.

What you activate is important to winning the challenge. In short, if you can use an ability whose icon matches one of the cards in your hand, you're off to a good start.

When and Why Do I Activate Geneline?

Activate your geneline if you have a geneline tag that fits this challenge and you pull a geneline card in the initial draw.

IF YOU HAVE THE "CREATIVE" TAG IN YOUR GENELINE, YOU CAN ACTIVATE GENELINE IN A PRINTING CHALLENGE TO CREATE A MONKEY.

When and Why Do I Activate Experience?

Activate your experience if you have the experience relevant to the challenge type and you pull an experience card in the initial draw.

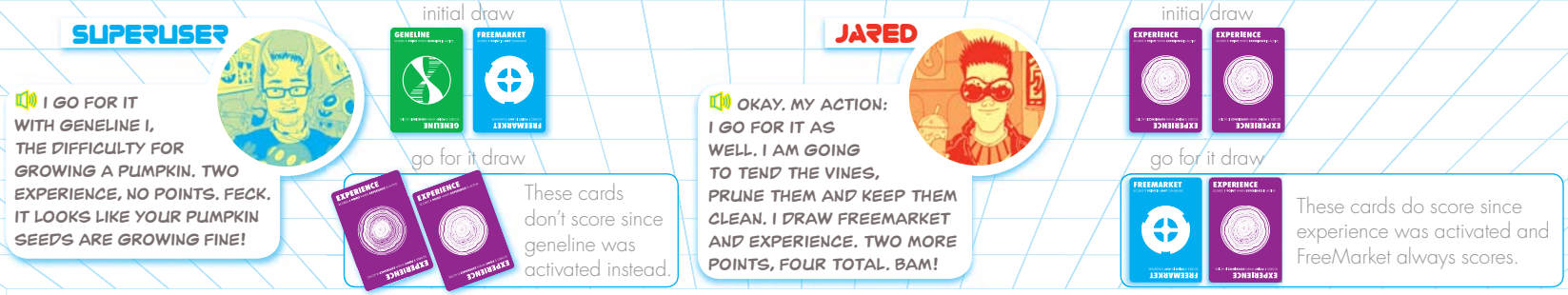
IF YOU'RE IN A WETWORK CHALLENGE, YOU CAN ACTIVATE WETWORK IF YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE POINTS IN THE EXPERIENCE. YOU CAN'T ACTIVATE BREAKING EXPERIENCE FOR A WETWORK CHALLENGE.

What Do I Do if I Draw Both?

If you pull a geneline and an experience card on your initial draw, you're in luck! If you have both a geneline and an experience that apply to this challenge, activate the higher ranked of the two.

What Do I Activate if I Don't Initially Draw Geneline or Experience?

When you don't pull an experience or a geneline card in your initial draw, you have to gamble. You need to activate the ability you think is going to score you the most points. Which cards do you think are going to come up more frequently, experience or geneline?


SUPERUSER
I GO FOR IT WITH GENELINE I, THE DIFFICULTY FOR GROWING A PUMPKIN. TWO EXPERIENCE, NO POINTS. FECK. IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR PUMPKIN SEEDS ARE GROWING FINE!
initial draw
GENELINE
FREEMARKET
go for it draw
EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCE
These cards don't score since geneline was activated instead.
JARED
OKAY. MY ACTION: I GO FOR IT AS WELL. I AM GOING TO TEND THE VINES, PRUNE THEM AND KEEP THEM CLEAN. I DRAW FREEMARKET AND EXPERIENCE. TWO MORE POINTS, FOUR TOTAL. BAM!
initial draw
EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCE
go for it draw
FREEMARKET
EXPERIENCE
These cards do score since experience was activated and FreeMarket always scores.

Which has the higher rating? Or maybe you have a trick up your sleeve—an interface or a piece of tech you want to try to bring in later.

IF I PULL ANY OF THESE THREE CARD COMBINATIONS ON MY INITIAL DRAW, I DON'T HAVE AN EASY INDICATOR FOR WHAT ABILITY TO ACTIVATE.

Basically, if you don't draw a card that's associated with one of your abilities, you've got to give your best guess as to what cards will come up during the challenge.

What if I Can't Activate Anything at All?

If you're in a challenge without a relevant geneline tag or the appropriate experience, then you don't activate anything. You can't score off experience or geneline cards in the challenge. You can only use FreeMarket and hazard cards. See the Go Free section in this chapter.

I'M TRYING TO PERFORM SOOTHING MUSIC, BUT I DON'T HAVE THE EPHEMERA EXPERIENCE, AND MY GENELINE TAGS ARE "BRUTAL, RESERVED AND STRONG." THEREFORE, I CAN'T ACTIVATE GENELINE OR EXPERIENCE.

Take Actions

Once everyone has activated an ability, each player takes one action in turn. The target goes first, then the initiator.

To take an action, declare to the group which action you're taking and describe how you're performing it. Or describe what you're doing and then play the action. Either way is cool.

There are six actions: go for it, support, recalibrate, burn, engage tech and call.

Go For It

You make a move. You push toward your goal—a show of force, a clever ploy, a stalwart defense.

When you use the go-for-it action, draw two more cards from your challenge deck. Add them face up to the hand in front of you.

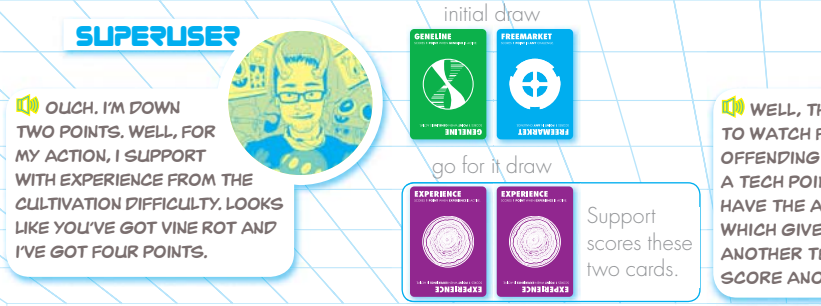
You may use the go-for-it action in the challenge as many times as the rating of the ability you initially activated.

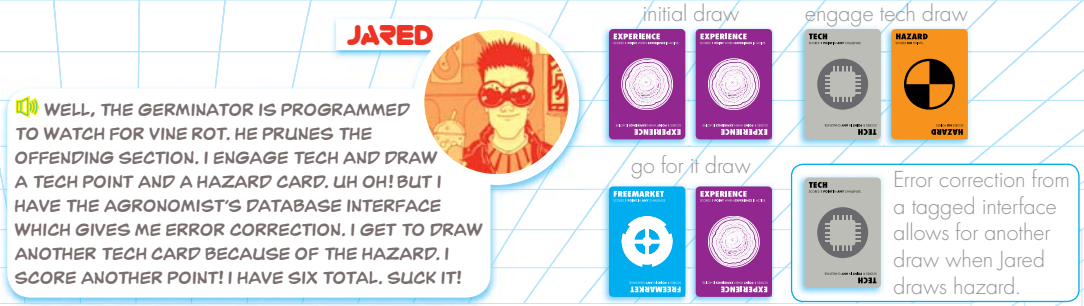
IF I HAVE WETWORK 2, I CAN GO FOR IT UP TO TWO TIMES DURING THIS CHALLENGE—NOT TWICE IN A SINGLE ACTION.

Support

You muster your reserves. You summon a brilliant riposte. You dig deep. You demonstrate your expertise.

The support action brings in an unactivated ability, either your geneline or your experience. You must be able to use this ability in the challenge. Either a geneline tag must fit the goal of the challenge, or the experience must be listed in the initiator or target experiences for the challenge.


SUPERUSER
OUCH. I'M DOWN TWO POINTS. WELL, FOR MY ACTION, I SUPPORT WITH EXPERIENCE FROM THE CULTIVATION DIFFICULTY. LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT VINE ROT AND I'VE GOT FOUR POINTS.
initial draw
GENELINE
FREEMARKET
go for it draw
EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCE
Support scores these two cards.


JARED
WELL, THE GERMINATOR IS PROGRAMMED TO WATCH FOR VINE ROT. HE PRUNES THE OFFENDING SECTION. I ENGAGE TECH AND DRAW A TECH POINT AND A HAZARD CARD. UH OH! BUT I HAVE THE AGRONOMIST'S DATABASE INTERFACE WHICH GIVES ME ERROR CORRECTION. I GET TO DRAW ANOTHER TECH CARD BECAUSE OF THE HAZARD. I SCORE ANOTHER POINT! I HAVE SIX TOTAL. SUCK IT!
initial draw
EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCE
engage tech draw
TECH
HAZARD
go for it draw
FREEMARKET
EXPERIENCE
TECH
Error correction from a tagged interface allows for another draw when Jared draws hazard.

I'M PRINTING A PET MONKEY FOR THOR, LEADER OF THE AESIR MRCZ. IF I INITIATED THE PRINTING CHALLENGE WITH MY GENELINE USING THE CREATIVE TAG, I CAN USE AN ACTION TO SUPPORT WITH MY PRINTING I EXPERIENCE.

Use support when you've activated geneline and you're showing some experience cards in your hand, or vice versa.

Engage Technology

Set phasers on stun! Shields to front! Throw the switch! Engage!

If you have a piece of tech with an experience tag that matches the initiator or target experiences, you may engage it in this challenge. The engage technology action allows you to draw two cards from the tech deck. Place the cards face up in front of you.

I CAN ENGAGE MY MATTER PRINTER 2 TECHNOLOGY TO DRAW FROM THE TECH DECK.

In a challenge, a piece of tech may be engaged a number of times equal to its rating.

SINCE THE TECH IS RATED AT 2, I CAN USE THIS ACTION ONCE MORE IN THIS CHALLENGE.

Recalibrate

There's been a glitch, an error, a miscalculation. Fortunately, you're more than human—a cybernetic being with built-in debugging.

Recalibrate converts hazard cards in your hand to bugs.

You may only use recalibrate if you have an interface with an experience tag that is listed as one of the initiator or target experiences for this challenge.

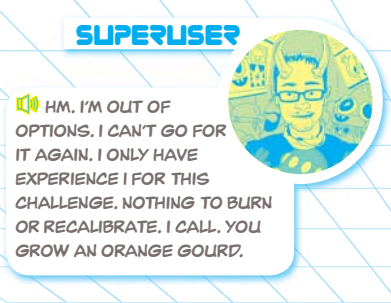
IF I DREW HAZARD ON MY LAST ACTION, ON THIS ACTION I CAN USE MY PRINTING-TAGGED INTERFACE TO RECALIBRATE. THIS WILL HELP ME IN FUTURE CHALLENGES.

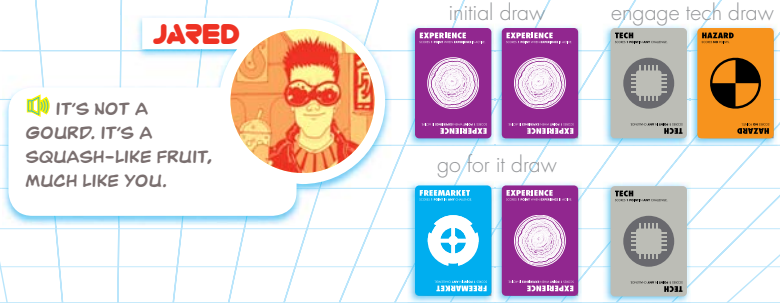
The interface's current rating must be 1 or higher.

Burn

You trick. You connive. You hack. You push. You wheedle. You force. You burn out.

The burn action sacrifices a point from your geneline, experience, technology or interface and removes a point-scoring card from your opponent's hand. You may burn one ability per action. You may burn multiple points at one time from the ability.


SUPERUSER
HM. I'M OUT OF OPTIONS. I CAN'T GO FOR IT AGAIN. I ONLY HAVE EXPERIENCE I FOR THIS CHALLENGE. NOTHING TO BURN OR RECALIBRATE. I CALL. YOU GROW AN ORANGE GOURD.
initial draw
GENELINE
FREEMARKET
go for it draw
EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCE
Support scores these two cards.



Burned cards are removed from your opponent's hand and placed in his discard pile.

Burning is an act of desperation, but when you absolutely must win a challenge, it's very powerful.

I'M LOSING TO THE SUPERUSER BY ONE. I'VE USED ALL MY GO FOR IT ACTIONS, SO I BURN MY RATING 2 PRINTER TECHNOLOGY. I SUBTRACT TWO POINTS FROM HIS HAND, AND MY MATTER PRINTER OVERHEATS, FUSES AND SHUTS DOWN. I MUST SAVE THE MONKEY AT ALL COSTS.

Burn experience: Reduce your experience rating by the number of points burned. These points are not recovered, but they may be relearned. See the Memories chapter for how that works.

Burn tech: Reduce the tech rating by the number of points burned. Tech reduced to 0 cannot be used in a challenge, but it may be recycled or repaired.

Burn interface: Interface is the most versatile tool to use with the this action. There are two ways to burn interface. If your interface is tagged for the challenge in which it is burned, the burn is temporary. The burned points are restored to the interface at the end of the session.

In this case, reduce your starting rating by the number of points burned and note the new rating in your "Current Rating" bubble.

If the interface is burned in a challenge for which it is not tagged, then its rating may only be restored by mobbing. Reduce your starting rating and note the new number on your profile.

Interface reduced to zero may not be used in a challenge for any action until it is restored to a current rating of 1 or higher.

Burn geneline: This is the ultimate sacrifice. Reduce your geneline rating by the number of points burned. You may change one geneline tag for each point burned. You only recover these points if you're dubbed into a new body.

Call

It's over. It's done. You've lost. You've won. Enough!

The call action ends a challenge. Use this action if you're winning and you want to lock in your victory, if you're losing and you've had enough of a beating or if the challenge is tied and you want to push for a tiebreaker round.

The call action may only be used after everyone participating in the challenge has had a chance to take at least one action. After everyone has gone once, the target—who took the first action—may then use the call action if he so desires. If he doesn't, users continue taking turns in the same order until one of them uses the call action.

SUPERUSER
WELL, YOU GROW A PUMPKIN, BUT THERE ARE SOME WRINKLES. FOR A PERFECT PUMPKIN, YOU NEED TO WIN BY 3. SO THIS IS AN IMPERFECT PUMPKIN.

AFTER I BURNED OUT MY MATTER PRINTER TO REMOVE TWO POINTS FROM THE SUPERUSER'S HAND, HE GOT ANOTHER ACTION. HE USED GO FOR IT AND DREW TWO HAZARD CARDS. NO POINTS! NOW IT'S MY ACTION, AND I'M WINNING BY ONE. I CAN'T AFFORD TO PRESS MY LUCK ANY FURTHER, SO I CALL.

A MONKEY IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWO IN THE BURNED-OUT MATTER PRINTER.

Error Correction

If you have an interface tagged for the challenge, you benefit from error correction.

Interface error correction kicks in when you draw a hazard card from either your challenge deck or the tech deck. When the hazard card is drawn, draw another card from the same deck. Put the hazard card and the third card into your hand.

You only get to draw one extra card per action. If you draw another hazard card, that's too much error to be corrected and you don't draw again on this action.

I'M BLAZING AWAY AT SMERSH WITH MY GYROJET PISTOL. I ENGAGE TECH. I DRAW A TECH POINT AND A HAZARD. UH OH! FORTUNATELY, I HAVE A SMART GUN INTERFACE TAGGED FOR WETWORK. MY ERROR CORRECTION FIRMWARE KICKS AND I DRAW A THIRD CARD FROM THE TECH DECK. A TECH POINT! WOOHOO!

Don't Forget To Say It!

Don't forget to tell us what you're doing with each of your actions. It's part of the action structure. You must describe what you're doing, otherwise we cannot proceed to the next action.

ENDING A CHALLENGE

After a user or the superuser has played the call action, the challenge is over. To determine the results of the challenge you do three things: tally the score, determine effect and calculate efficiency.

Scoring

To win a challenge, you need to score more points than your opponent. The cards drawn either score a point or they don't, depending on the cards and actions.

A FreeMarket card is always worth one point.

If you activated your geneline at the start of the challenge, you score points on geneline cards. If you did not activate or support with your geneline, these cards do not score.

SUPERUSER

WELL, WITH MARGIN OF VICTORY 2, YOU CAN MAKE EITHER A RATING 1 OR RATING 2 PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY. THE LOWER THE RATING, THE MORE IMPERFECT IT IS.

JARED

WHY WOULD I WANT A MORE IMPERFECT PUMPKIN, THEN? WHY NOT JUST SPEND BOTH POINTS TO GET AS HIGH A RATING AS POSSIBLE?

SUPERUSER

GOOD QUESTION! YOU CAN ALSO SPEND YOUR MARGIN OF VICTORY ON EFFICIENCY. EFFICIENCY GETS YOU A REBATE ON YOUR FLOW COST.

If you activated an experience at the start of this challenge, you score points on experience cards. If you did not activate or support with your experience, these cards do not score.

If you used the Support action, you score points on both geneline and experience cards.

If you used the Engage Tech action, any tech cards you drew are worth one point each.

Hazard cards do not score points. They represent little things that went wrong during the challenge.

Whoever has the highest score wins the challenge.

Target Wins

If the target wins, no margin of victory need be factored. None of the flow he risked is spent. He gets all back. The initiator loses and must pay the full flow cost for the challenge.

This result is very simple and abrupt!

Initiator Wins: Margin of Victory

If the initiator wins, subtract the target's score from the initiator's. This determines the margin of victory.

Margin of victory is spent on effect and efficiency.

Effect

There are three levels of effect for a challenge. One point of your margin of victory must always be spent on one and only one effect from the challenge results.

Each challenge has three possible results or effects: a marginal effect, a moderate effect and a full effect. The first effect costs one point of your margin of victory. The second result costs two points of your margin of victory. The third effect costs three points.

IF YOU WIN BY ONE, YOU TAKE THE FIRST LEVEL OF EFFECT AND YOU'RE DONE. IF YOU WIN BY MORE, YOU CAN START JIGGERING POINTS TO MAXIMIZE EFFECT AND EFFICIENCY.

Consult the effect list to determine what the right effect is for your goal. A wise user does this in advance.

Specifically Specific

Each of the challenge types has three specific effect levels. Consult the Specific Challenges section for each challenge's effects.

JARED

HOW MUCH OF A REBATE WOULD I GET ON A 2 POINT INVESTMENT?

SUPERUSER

HM. 1 POINT OF EFFICIENCY IS WORTH A 25% REBATE ROUNDED UP...SO 1 POINT. OH! AND YOU HAVE TO SPEND AT LEAST ONE POINT ON EFFECT.

JARED

WELL, I HAVE 10 FLOW LEFT. I'M GOING TO PUT BOTH POINTS INTO THE EFFECT AND NONE IN EFFICIENCY. THAT'S RATING 2 PUMPKIN TECH. HOW DO I TAG IT?

Efficiency

The Aggregate rewards efficiency. The smarter your use of the station's assets, the more flow the Aggregate will slide your way.

In addition to an effect for your actions, you can spend your margin of victory on efficiency. The more efficient you are, the greater the flow rebate you get from the challenge.

- One point of your margin of victory delivers a 25% rebate on flow invested in the challenge.
- Two points of your margin of victory delivers a 50% rebate.
- Three points of your margin of victory delivers a 75% rebate.

Round up any fractions.

IF I INVESTED 10 FLOW TO INITIATE A CHALLENGE AND WON BY ONE POINT, I MUST SPEND THAT MARGIN OF VICTORY ON EFFECT. I CANNOT SPEND MY MARGIN OF VICTORY ON EFFICIENCY, SO I PAY THE FULL COST–10 FLOW–FOR THE CHALLENGE.

IF I WON THAT CHALLENGE BY TWO, I CAN SPEND ONE POINT ON EFFECT AND ONE ON EFFICIENCY. THIS NETS ME A 25% FLOW REBATE. THE INITIAL INVESTMENT WAS 10 FLOW, SO I GET BACK TWO AND A HALF FLOW, ROUNDED UP TO THREE. OR I COULD FORGO EFFICIENCY AND DUMP BOTH POINTS INTO EFFECT.

IF I WON THAT CHALLENGE BY THREE, I CAN SPEND ONE OR TWO POINTS ON EFFICIENCY – GETTING BACK UP TO 50% OF MY INVESTED FLOW. OR I CAN PUSH ALL OF MY MARGIN OF VICTORY INTO EFFECT AND GET THE MAXIMUM EFFECT!

IF I WON THAT CHALLENGE BY FOUR, I CAN SPEND THREE POINTS ON A FULL EFFECT AND ONE ON EFFICIENCY. OR I COULD SPEND TWO ON EFFECT AND TWO ON EFFICIENCY, OR ONE ON EFFECT AND THREE ON EFFICIENCY.

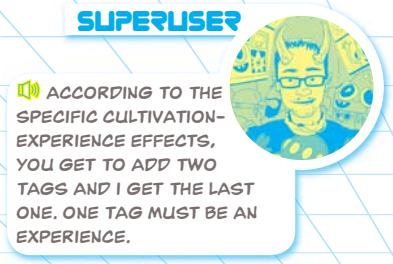
IT IS BEST TO WIN A CHALLENGE BY SIX. THEN YOU CAN TAKE A FULL EFFECT AND A 75% REBATE. THAT'S GOOD LIVING.

Hazard Gives You Bugs

When you lose a challenge, you usually don't come away empty handed. Even though you've lost, there are all sorts of little things that go wrong for the winner that help you in the long run. Those little things didn't prevent him from winning, of course, but these little glitches and hiccups may come back to bite him later. We call these minor problems "bugs."

At the end of the challenge, for each hazard card in the winner's hand, the loser receives one bug that can be spent in future challenges.

WHEN I WAS TRYING TO TAKE OUT SMERSH, I WON, BUT I HAD ONE HAZARD CARD IN MY HAND. THEREFORE, THE SUPERUSER GETS ONE BUG FROM ME. HE CAN USE THAT AGAINST ANY OTHER USER IN A LATER CHALLENGE.


SUPERUSER
ACCORDING TO THE SPECIFIC CULTIVATION-EXPERIENCE EFFECTS, YOU GET TO ADD TWO TAGS AND I GET THE LAST ONE. ONE TAG MUST BE AN EXPERIENCE.

JARED
WELL, I'M MAKING THIS FOR A PARTY, SO I'LL CHOOSE EPHEMERA FOR THE EXPERIENCE, AND SINCE THERE'S ONLY ONE, I WANT IT TO BE HUGE.

SUPERUSER
NICE. THE THIRD TAG IS... HALLUCINOGENIC. YOU HAVE A HUGE, HALLUCINOGENIC, EPHEMERA RATING 2 PUMPKIN. OH, AND SINCE I LOST, I GET ONE BUG FOR YOUR HAZARD CARD. LASTLY, WE NEED TO DISCARD OUR HANDS.

Discard

After the winner and loser have been determined, effect and efficiency calculated and bugs allocated, take your hand of cards and place them face up in your discard pile. No peeking!

Be sure to return the tech deck cards to the tech deck discard pile. Don't mix up the decks!

TIES

If a challenge results in a tie, use the following procedure.

Tied Up Hazard

Your opponent gets bugs equal to the hazard showing in your hand. This counts for both of you, since there is no winner yet.

Clear the Deck

After bugs are distributed, discard your hands. Be sure to put the tech deck cards back in the tech discard pile.

Round Two: Tiebreaker

Ties are broken by playing another challenge. Everyone performs a new initial draw and then takes actions. The ability you activated in the first round remains activated in the second. The user who did not call in the first round takes the first action in the tiebreaker round.

Your go for it actions refresh, but tech and interface do not. If you supported in the first round, that ability remains in effect as well. You can't call in the tie round until everyone has had a turn. Take actions until a winner is determined.

Double or Nothing!

When playing out a tiebreaker round, the challenge initiator states a second goal, but doesn't invest additional flow. If he wins the tiebreaker, he gets two effects for the price of one. For example, if he spends three margin of victory on effect, he gets two level three effects. You must state your second goal at the start of the tiebreaker.

Target Goal

The target gets a juicy carrot, too. If he wins the second round, he gets an effect according to his margin of victory and he gets his full flow refunded. Normally, targets just defend themselves. They stop the initiator, but don't get their own effect. In a tiebreaker, they get their own effect.

Tell everyone what you're fighting for at the start of the tiebreaker. Ties are intense!

Sudden Death Overtime

In the unlikely event that the tiebreaker round also ends in a tie, you go into sudden death overtime to determine the winner.

Each user draws one card. If one user scores and the other doesn't, the scoring user wins the

JARED
I HAVE A QUESTION. ON MY SECOND ACTION WE BOTH HAD FOUR POINTS. WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF I CALLED THEN?
SUPERUSER
OH! WE WOULD HAVE CLEARED OUR HANDS AWAY. YOU WOULD DECLARE ANOTHER GOAL. AS THE TARGET, I WOULD GET A GOAL (NORMALLY I DON'T). AND THEN WE WOULD RUN THROUGH THE CHALLENGE PROCESS AGAIN–INITIAL DRAWS AND ACTIONS.
JARED
REALLY? THEN I WOULD HAVE MADE TWO PUMPKINS FOR THE PARTY! SEEMS LIKE SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD TO TIE RATHER THAN GO FOR THE EASY WIN. I'LL HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT FOR NEXT TIME.

challenge by a margin of victory of one. If both users score or fail to score on the single draws, continue drawing until one user scores a point and the other does not.

If you initiated the challenge and won in the overtime round, then you get two marginal—level one—effects and no flow rebate for efficiency.

If you were the target and won in the overtime round, then you get one marginal effect and a full flow rebate.

SPENDING BUGS

Bugs are earned by losing challenges. They're useful. They add oompf to your future efforts!

Initiating with Bugs

You may spend one bug at the start of a challenge to draw an extra card. Instead of drawing two cards at the top of the challenge, you draw three and discard a bug.

Go For It Bugs

Bugs are spent on go for it actions when you're out of draws. One bug spent equals one card. You may spend up to two bugs on one action—so two bugs get you a full go for it action.

You can spend bugs in this manner regardless of the rating of your activated ability and regardless of how many go for it actions you've used in this challenge.

Sudden Death Bugs

If you have bugs when going into a sudden death overtime, you may spend one bug to draw an extra card for each sudden-death draw. So, instead of pulling one card to score and break the tie, you may spend a bug to draw a second card.

SUPERUSER
OH, AND IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE CULTIVATION EXPERIENCE OR A TAGGED GENELINE, YOU WOULD HAVE ONLY SCORED ON THAT FREEMARKET CARD.
JARED
IF I STILL HAD CULTIVATION TECH, I COULD HAVE USED THAT, RIGHT?
SUPERUSER
YES! IN THAT CASE—PROVIDED YOU ALSO HAD THE INTERFACE—YOU WOULD HAVE SCORED THREE POINTS TOTAL IN THAT CHALLENGE.

GO FREE

No Experience or Geneline

What happens if you get sucked into a conflict without an appropriate experience or geneline? You go free.

You may use the go for it up to three times. You may only score on FreeMarket cards. You may not support. You may engage tech, burn and call. You may recalibrate if appropriate. You may use error correction, as well.

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

In order to prevent life on the station from blurring into one brightly colored mess, we've divided all possible activities into 14 experiences: breaking, cultivation, ephemera, flood/bleeding, ghosting, mobbing, negotiations, printing, recycling, shaping, social engineering, switching, thin slicing and wetwork.

Each challenge is broken down into a description, flow class, what ability the initiator uses, what ability the target uses, effects and loss results.

BREAKING

Breaking breaks stuff—software, firmware, hardware, wetware, grayware—anything but people. On the station, there's no difference between software and hardware. You'd call us hackers or vandals, maybe saboteurs. You want to take down that wall? We breakers hack it. You want to take out that malfunctioning security drone? Call a breaker.

Breaking reduces the effectiveness of or destroys an interface or piece of technology, or hacks data from tech or keys.

Flow Class: Material or Aggregate. Use material costs against tech and interface and Aggregate costs against the station and its sweeps.

Initiator Uses: Breaking or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Breaking or appropriately tagged geneline. Target is either the user who owns the targeted tech or the Aggregate as played by the superuser.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Pick one: Reduce target tech or interface rating by 1. Or change one tag on target tech or interface. Or extract one point of data.

Effect 2: Pick one: Reduce target tech or interface rating by 2. Or change two tags on target tech or interface. Or extract two points of data.

Effect 3: Pick one: Reduce target tech or interface rating by 3. Or change all tags on target tech or interface. Or extract three points of data.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: The breaking attempt fails and the owner of the item in question—or the Aggregate itself—is alerted.

SAIF

I'VE USED BREAKING TO HACK INTO A SECURITY SWEEP AND STEAL ITS VIDEO FOOTAGE, AND TO TEAR APART ANOTHER USER'S VEGETABLE GARDEN.

TERRY

CULTIVATION CAN BE HOUSEBREAKING A PUPPY, GROWING SOME HYBRID MANGO TREES OR SEWING TOGETHER A DRESS FOR A WEDDING.

CULTIVATION

Some freemers love taking the time to make things by hand. It takes longer than printing, it's less efficient, and it's a lot messier, but some folks do it simply for the sake of doing it. And the rest of us enjoy receiving cultivated items as gifts. Cultivation is used to produce old-world technology by hand—cooking, sewing, fabricating, growing, even some basic electrical engineering.

Cultivation creates a piece of technology that may be used, traded or gifted.

Flow Class: Material

Initiator Uses: Cultivation or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Superuser is the target and opposes the initiator with one of the following ability sets, based on the user's goal for the challenge:

- Geneline 1—Simple refinements of existing materials, like cooking or carpentry.
- Geneline Experience 1—Growing something, like a pumpkin or a chicken.
- Experience 2, Geneline 1—Refinements like metalwork, lenses, and wheels.
- Geneline 2, Experience 1—Making refinements like dyed cloth, leather or paper.
- Experience 2, Geneline 2—Building simple machines like pistons, a camera obscura or an electric circuit.
- Geneline 3, Experience 2—Refining materials into processed foods, chemicals or plastic.
- Experience 3, Geneline 2—Creating complex machines like an internal combustion engine or circuit-based computer.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: You produce a piece of rating 1 cultivated tech. Initiator adds one tag. The superuser adds two tags.

Effect 2: You produce a piece of rating 2 cultivated tech. Initiator adds two tags. The superuser adds one tag.

Effect 3: You produce a piece of rating 3 cultivated tech. Initiator adds all three tags.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Superuser decides if you produce nothing but garbage or if you produce a piece of mutant tech. If you cultivate mutant tech, the superuser sets its rating and tags.

EPHEMERA

The feeds on the station are constantly buzzing with ideas, concepts and philosophies. Some take root in the culture; some wither and die. Ephemerists turn many of these ideas into songs, speeches, works of art, philosophies and even religions.

JARED
I WAS AT THIS PERFORMANCE WHERE SOME WOMAN DUCT TAPED A HIGH-HEEL SHOE TO HER FACE. I'M NOT SURE WHAT IT WAS ABOUT, BUT I LEFT THE SHOW THINKING ABOUT IT.

Ephemera creates a piece of art that instills a short-term memory in the listener, viewer or consumer. All who experience the artwork must add the short-term memory to their current list. If the list is full, this replaces a memory of the user's choice.

Flow Class: Targeted (self). The superuser may set the flow cost up to the user's current flow rating.

Initiator Uses: Ephemera or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Superuser is the target. As the target, the superuser represents the user's inner demons—self doubt and inadequacy. The superuser has access to geneline 2 (Giant Useless Loser: artist, failure, useless) and ephemera experience 2.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Your ephemera leaves a lot of room for interpretation. Embed it with one concept. Anyone who experiences the ephemera must write new a short-term memory that incorporates that concept. The other two concepts of the short-term memory are up to the target user or consumer.

Effect 2: Your ephemera carries a strong message, intended or not. Embed it with two concepts. All who experience the ephemera must take a short-term memory that incorporates those two concepts. The remaining concept is up to the target user or consumer.

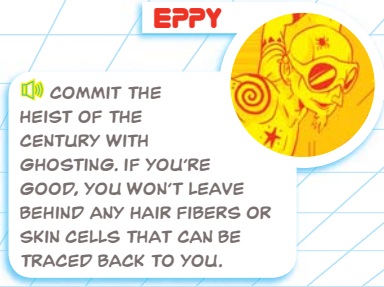
Effect 3: Your ephemera is clear and poignant. It inspires the mind. Embed your ephemera with one complete short-term memory. All who experience the ephemera must take this short-term memory without modification.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: The superuser produces a fully formed short-term memory that radiates like a beacon from the ephemerist's work.

FLOOD/BLEEDING

On the station, not only can we break into each other's data and snap each other's spines, but we can also hack into each other's brains! Using flood/bleeding you can perform a high-speed, high bandwidth hack into your target's memories. From there, you can extract memory data or rewrite some of the existing firmware—in other words, you can steal memories and implant new ones. Flood/bleeding uses a similar, scaled down version of the tech used to back up our brains. It's so sensitive and bandwidth heavy, however, transfer can only be done via direct dermal network interface—in other words, by touch.

All memories have a powerful quantum property rendering each one unique. They can't be copied. So if yours is bled, then you forget it and the bleeder remembers it. Life gets strange when you can't remember what you forgot, but you know that you forgot something important.


EPPY
COMMIT THE HEIST OF THE CENTURY WITH GHOSTING. IF YOU'RE GOOD, YOU WON'T LEAVE BEHIND ANY HAIR FIBERS OR SKIN CELLS THAT CAN BE TRACED BACK TO YOU.

Flood/bleeding extracts or implants long-term memories.

Flow Class: Targeted

Initiator Uses: Flood/bleeding. You must have the flood/bleeding experience to initiate a flood/bleeding challenge. You may support with an appropriately tagged geneline, but not initiate.

Target Uses: Flood/bleeding, switching or any geneline.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Change, implant or remove one long-term memory concept.

Effect 2: Change, implant or remove two long-term memory concepts.

Effect 3: Change, implant or remove one complete long-term memory.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: The superuser may cause data that was to be bled into a target to be lost, or he may flush out all of the initiating flood/bleeder's current short-term memories.

Flood/Bleeding Special Requirement: Memories are complicated things. If you're flooding a target, you must either sacrifice one of your own memories—implanting it in your target—or you must spend one point of data for each concept flooded. If you have insufficient data, you spend what you have and make up the difference with concepts from your own memories as determined by the superuser. Any of your memories flooded into another user are forgotten by you.

GHOSTING

The station is overrun with cams, sensors and keyed eyeballs. It's hard to go anywhere without being noticed, logged in and registered. Heck, most of us are streaming a location beacon. Ghosts know how to get around the station without being seen, to get into places that most folks consider secure.

Ghosting allows the user to shadow, sneak and steal undetected.

Flow Class: Targeted or Aggregate

Initiator Uses: Ghosting or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Ghosting or appropriately tagged geneline.

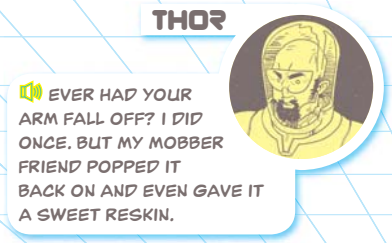
Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: You get what you're after, but the target immediately notices the item is missing and there's a clue about the theft.

Effect 2: You get what you're after, but you leave a clue behind. Target doesn't notice until you're safely at home.

Effect 3: You get away clean, and the target doesn't have a clue.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: If the target wins a ghosting challenge, you are caught red-handed.



MOBBING

Mobbing is slang for "modification of body." Freemers live to interface with machines. We love to modify our bodies—bionetics, cybernetics, genetics, wetware, headware, grayware. You name it, we'll mob it and take it for a spin.

Mobbing is used to design and implant interfaces.

Flow Class: Material

Initiator Uses: Mobbing or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Geneline with appropriate tag. The more advanced the geneline, the harder it is to mob.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Create or repair a level 1 interface. You may choose one tag. The superuser may choose two tags.

Effect 2: Create or repair a level 2 interface. You may choose two tags. The superuser may choose one tag. Or upgrade level 1 to level 2.

Effect 3: Create or repair a level 3 interface. You may choose all three of its tags. Or upgrade level 2 to level 3.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: The interface is not properly implanted. The superuser may change the rating or tags of one of the target's existing interfaces. If the target has no interface, the superuser may change one of his geneline tags.

NEGOTIATION

Negotiation, the oldest art. Back at the dawn of civilization, first thing we protohumans did was try to bargain with each other—I'll trade you some mastodon meat for these here delicious wild herbs…. When that didn't work, we bashed heads. Life is still much the same on FreeMarket, with two significant quirks. Negotiations are tied into your flow, and you get reversed if deathed by a rock.

When negotiating, two parties offer terms. We'll do X if you do Y. Negotiation binds them to the deal by key-signing a contract with the Aggregate. When you negotiate, you become signatories to a contract. Now, a negotiator himself can just act as a middle man; he doesn't have to sign the contract if he's not involved. But if you're acting for yourself, you work the deal, sign the contract, complete your end and earn the flow.

Negotiation creates binding contracts that award 5 points of flow to the signatories upon completion of the terms.

Flow Class: Targeted

Initiator Uses: Negotiation or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Negotiation, Social Engineering or geneline with appropriate tag.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Your target agrees to the deal on the condition of a major concession of his choosing.

Effect 2: Your target agrees to the deal on the condition of a minor concession of his choosing.

Effect 3: Your target agrees to the deal without any conditions.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Your target sets the terms of the deal or walks away.

PRINTING

When we talk about printing, immigrants always think we're talking about producing a piece of warm paper with toner laser-burned onto the surface in the form of words and pictures. That is very primitive thinking. Printers on FreeMarket are a bit more advanced. We print food, tech, and—hell—people. You design a piece to spec using your key. Submit that to your nearest, bestest printing station. A short while later, after consuming some bio bricks and venting serious waste heat, you've got a perfect replica of your design. Well, that's the idea. Most of the time, things don't turn out perfectly.

Printing creates technology that may then be used in challenges, traded away or gifted.

Flow Class: Material

Initiator Uses: Printing or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Superuser is always the target. Use an ability set from the following list based on the complexity of the item being produced:

- Experience 1—Simple, synthetic items without moving parts like sheets of metal or plastic (crowbar)
- Geneline 1—Simple organic items like algae or bacterial biofilms
- Geneline 1, Experience 1—Simple machines, food (wheelbarrow, pancakes)
- Geneline 2, Experience 1—Living plants
- Experience 2, Geneline 1—Moderately complex machines (pocket watch)
- Geneline 2, Experience 2—Organs (bones, blood, kidneys)
- Geneline 3, Experience 2—Biomechanical devices (cybernetic artificial heart)
- Experience 3, Geneline 2—Complex machines (robots, hoverboads)
- Geneline 3, Experience 3—Organisms (dust bunnies, monkeys, sea slugs)

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: You create a level 1 piece of tech. Assign it one tag. The superuser provides the other two tags.

Effect 2: You create a level 2 piece of tech. Assign it two tags. The superuser sets the final tag.

Effect 3: You create a level 3 piece of tech, and assign all three tags.

SAIF
WHEN YOU'RE A BILLION MILES FROM EARTH, YOU LEARN TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT YOU HAVE. THIS MEANS FIXING BROKEN TECH OR HACKING TECH YOU DON'T NEED TO MAKE STUFF YOU DO NEED.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Superuser decides if you produce useless junk or if you produce gray goo. If you accidentally print gray goo, the superuser decides its rating and tags.

RECYCLING

Space and materials are at a premium on the station. Despite what some prairie dogs might think, we don't have infinite resources. We have to carefully monitor all of the stuff that offmarket bodies take for granted—air, water, carbon, heat and light. So we love folks who devise inventive ways to use our limited resources—clever chaps who will reduce, reuse and repair before they just head for the printer. They are the unsung heroes of FreeMarket.

Recycling is used to repair tech and interface. It may also be used to merge two pieces of tech and create a new piece of tech.

Flow Class: Material

Initiator Uses: Recycling or appropriately tagged geneline.

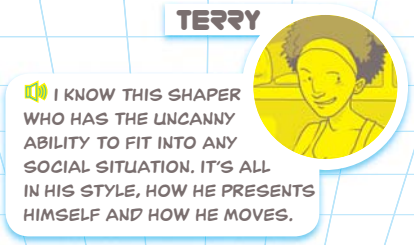
Target Uses: The superuser is the target. Use one of the following ability sets based on the difficulty of the goal:

- Attempting to repair burned out (rating 0) technology and interface—Experience 1, Tech 2.
- Attempting to repair one level of damage to tech or interface—Tech 1.
- Attempting to repair two levels of damage to tech or interface—Experience 1, Tech 1.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 1 and 1—Experience 1, Tech 1.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 1 and 2—Experience 1, Tech 2.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 1 and 3—Experience 1, Tech 3.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 2 and 1—Experience 2, Tech 1.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 2 and 2—Experience 2, Tech 2.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 2 and 3—Experience 2, Tech 3.
- Merging two pieces of tech rated 3 and 3—Experience 3, Tech 3.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator spends his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Repair one point of damaged or burned out technology or interface. Or merge two pieces of tech, taking the lower rating of the two, and choose one tag from either of their tag lists. The superuser creates the remaining two tags.

Effect 2: Repair up to two points of damaged or burned-out tech or interface. Or merge two pieces of tech, taking the average rating (rounding down), and two tags from either of their tag lists. The superuser creates the remaining tag.


TERRY
I KNOW THIS SHAPER WHO HAS THE UNCANNY ABILITY TO FIT INTO ANY SOCIAL SITUATION. IT'S ALL IN HIS STYLE, HOW HE PRESENTS HIMSELF AND HOW HE MOVES.

Effect 3: Repair up to three points of damaged or burned-out tech or interface. Or merge two pieces of tech, taking the higher rating of the two, and choose three tags from their tag lists.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: If repairing a piece of technology or interface, the item is either destroyed in the process or the superuser may change any and all of the item's tags. If merging two pieces of tech, either the merger fails and both pieces of tech lose a tag (erase it and leave an empty slot) or the superuser can create a wholly new piece of tech from the merged pieces at a rating and with tags of his creation.

SHAPING

Shaping is the art of reading and manipulating "gesture clusters"; body language, facial expressions, tics and quirks are all instruments of shaping. You play those instruments and make your target dance: make him take a swing at you; make him accept a friend request; make him drop what he's stolen; or even induce him to accept a gift. Shaping also can be used to read a person—see who he is and what makes him tick. Offmarket folks call shaping "kinesics."

Shaping causes the target to take an involuntary action. Alternately, it allows you to read a target's experiences, geneline or even long-term memories.

Flow Class: Targeted

Initiator Uses: Shaping or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Shaping, social engineering, thin slicing or appropriately tagged geneline.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: You cause your target to make a single gesture or expression. Or you read your target's geneline and its tags.

Effect 2: You cause your target to make two simple gestures or expressions. Or you read your target's experiences.

Effect 3: You cause your target involuntarily to undertake a complex action or gesture. Or you read a target's long-term memories.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Target does the opposite of what you desire or intend—with an effect of 1, if applicable. Or target shapes you at effect 1.

SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Back in the old days, social engineering was a dirty word. It meant "tricking someone out of their password or identification" to gain access to some system. It was easier than hacking. On FreeMarket, social engineering isn't all bad. We use the term to cover any verbal or social manipulation—any time you're talking to someone and trying to induce them to do something they wouldn't do otherwise.

RAY
SOCIAL ENGINEERS ARE ALWAYS TRYING TO GET SOMETHING FOR NOTHING. BUNCH OF BASTARDS, THEY ARE. JUST TWEAKING YOU FOR THE SHEER CHALLENGE OF IT.

Flow Class: Targeted

Initiator Uses: Social engineering or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Social engineering, shaping or appropriately tagged geneline.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: You get what you want, but you must offer your target an incentive in the form of a promise, a service, a gift or data, but not flow.

Effect 2: You get what you want, but your target goes along grudgingly' he's aware that he's been manipulated but doesn't know how.

Effect 3: Outright victory! You manipulate your target, while he thinks he got the best of you.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Your gambit fails. Either your target catches on to your game and knows he's been manipulated unsuccessfully, or your target completely misconstrues what you want and does something amazingly unhelpful for you. Superuser chooses.

SWITCHING

Switching—an offmarket immigrant might call it "identity theft." Every freemer's personal information—flow, friends, frownies, MRCZ and even location—is carried in his key. This information is all maintained, checked, updated and backed up by the Aggregate. Switchers hack the key and the Aggregate in order to trade identities between users. It's a quirk of the system. The information itself is inviolable, but who it's tagged to can be changed momentarily. This wreaks havoc on station life: Someone steals your identity, and gives it to a savvy wetworker who then deaths your popular thin-slicer wife. Suddenly you're taking all the flow hits. We don't like switchers.

Switching changes identities from one user to another. A switcher cannot switch his own identity.

Flow Class: Aggregate

DANIEL
I DON'T DO THIS BECAUSE IT'S DANGEROUS, AND I DON'T ASSOCIATE WITH PEOPLE WHO NEED SWITCHING. YOU REALLY CAN RUIN SOMEONE'S LIFE WITH THIS STUFF.

Initiator Uses: Switching or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Switching challenges are performed against the Aggregate. The Aggregate's processing power and security varies due to usage load and infrastructure. When a switching challenge is initiated, the superuser draws a card from his deck to determine how potent the Aggregate is for this challenge.

- Hazard indicates: Experience 1.
- FreeMarket indicates: Tech 1, Experience 1.
- Geneline indicates: Tech 2, Experience 2.
- Experience indicates: Tech 3, Experience 3.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: The target's identity is switched for one challenge or until he takes a flow hit.

Effect 2: The target's identity is switched for the remainder of the session or until he loses flow hit.

Effect 3: The target's identity is switched until the switcher releases his hold on the identities.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: If the Aggregate wins the challenge, something has gone wrong. Some of your tags have been corrupted. One of your potential switching targets gains temporary ownership of your (non-cultivated) technology or the other potential victim's (non-cultivated) technology. That person may engage and burn out that tech in a future challenge.

THIN SLICING

The station is one big small town, but life moves fast here. We're assaulted by wave after wave of trends and fads. Coolness and fashion sweep through the feeds and MRCZs like wildfire. What's earning you friends today is going to net you frownies tomorrow. Thin slicers are at the core of this movement. They hunt for the new cool, the unspotted interesting happenings, and then leak them to their feeds, adopt them in their MRCZs and tell their friends about them.

Thin slicing is used to either give value to data, read an item's tags or to cause trends to be adopted by MRCZs on the station.

Flow Class: Targeted (self). The superuser may set the flow cost up to the user's current flow rating.

Initiator Uses: Thin slicing or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: In order to use thin slicing, you must see past your biases. In this challenge, the superuser plays the role of your hesitation, ignorance and prejudice. He uses your geneline and/or relevant experience against you in order to cloud your judgement.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator spends his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: Pick one: Increase the value of a piece of data by 1. Or read one tag from a geneline, piece of tech or interface. Or cause a seemingly useless concept to be casually adopted by one small group or MRCZ.

Effect 2: Pick one: Increase the value of a piece of data by 2. Or read two tags from a geneline, piece of tech or interface. Or you cause an otherwise unrecognized or unpopular concept to be adopted in a phase of the station or by a group of MRCZs.

Effect 3: Pick one: Increase the value of a piece of data by 3. Or read three tags from a geneline, piece of tech or interface. Or cause a small trend, quirk or fad to be adopted by the whole station.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Either the concept you're attempting to grant cachet dies on the vine—and loses all value—or the superuser can release a mutant strain of your trend on a person, MRCZ or even the whole station in the case of a cataclysmic failure.

WETWORK

Wetwork is the age-old art of rendering another person nonfunctional while remaining functional yourself. We call this process "deathing." Wetworkers on the station use weapons of all descriptions—from crossbows, to rayguns, to bare hands. Our favorite is the gyrojet pistol. That thing has style—I gave an attaboy to the last guy who deathed me with one of those sweeties.

Wetwork removes the target from play or damages a target's interface.

Flow Class: Targeted.

Initiator Uses: Wetwork or appropriately tagged geneline.

Target Uses: Wetwork or appropriately tagged geneline.

Initiator Wins/Target Loses: Initiator may spend his margin of victory on the following effects:

Effect 1: You lightly death your target. He must be resuscitated by the Aggregate's medical sweeps. The target loses two short-term memories (of his choice). If appropriate, the target cannot physically participate in the next challenge while he recovers. Alternately, you can destroy one point of your target's interface.

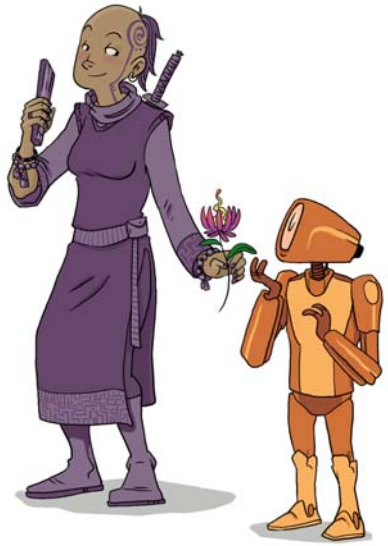
Effect 2: Your target is heavily deathed. He must be reassembled by the Aggregate's medical sweeps. The target loses three short-term memories (of his choice). If appropriate, the target cannot participate in the next challenge, as he's busy being put back together. Alternately, you can destroy two points of your target's interface. These can be from the same interface or two different ones.

Effect 3: Perfect death! You render your target's body useless. He must have a new body grown by the Aggregate. Your target loses all of his short-term memories. If appropriate, the target must sit out the next challenge, as he's being

JARED
I WANT TO GIFT THIS JACKED PUMPKIN TO LENIN MERENGUÉ NOW.
SUPERUSER
WELL, LENIN SAYS, "THANK YOU, BUT THIS PUMPKIN IS HALLUCINOGENIC. I DON'T THINK IT'S APPROPRIATE FOR OUR PARTY." HE DECLINES THE GIFT.
RAY
JARED, TERA HAS SHAPING. I DO, TOO. LET'S DO A GROUP SHAPING CHALLENGE TO GET LENIN TO ACCEPT THE GIFT.

restored from his backup. Alternately, you can destroy three points of his interface. These points can be knocked off one or more interfaces.

Target Wins/Initiator Loses: Your target survives intact and escapes your depredations. He may warn others of your attack or simply frownie your ass.



GROUP CHALLENGES

Challenges aren't always one-on-one affairs. Users can pile into a challenge—it can be two on two, three on two, two on one, three on one or even four on one! The risks are greater, but so are the rewards. We've programmed the Aggregate to encourage cooperation. Group challenges are the premier venue for cooperation.

All In, We're Gonna Win

Once a challenge is initiated, other users may be invited to join. They may join on the side of the initiator or the target. They must have permission from that side in order to jump in.

Group Risk

All participating users must risk the flow cost for the challenge individually. Initiators and targets both must pay according to the flow class.

Group Draw and Activation

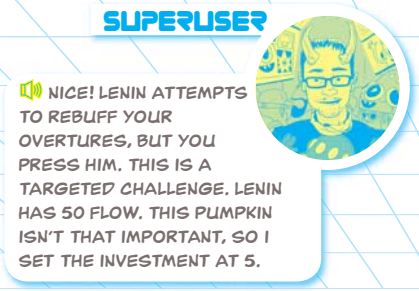
The same rules for initiator/target ability activation apply to all users and the superuser in the challenge. Each user draws two cards, lays them out and activates either geneline or experience.

Taking Group Actions

Starting with the initial target, each user on the target's side takes an action in turn. Once the targets are done, starting with the initiator, each user on the initiator's side takes an action in turn. Once the initiators have all gone, the targets take another set of actions.

Use the same user-to-user order from round to round.

This process continues until a user plays the call action. The call action cannot be played until everyone participating in the challenge has taken one action.


SUPERUSER
NICE! LENIN ATTEMPTS TO REBUFF YOUR OVERTURES, BUT YOU PRESS HIM. THIS IS A TARGETED CHALLENGE. LENIN HAS 50 FLOW. THIS PUMPKIN ISN'T THAT IMPORTANT, SO I SET THE INVESTMENT AT 5.

Scoring a Group Challenge

Scoring and flow rebate are handled differently in a group challenge.

The highest scoring player wins the group challenge, just like in a regular challenge. Compare all of the other scores on the winner's side to the highest score on the loser's side. Add the difference of each hand that scored higher than the losers' highest score to the winner's margin of victory.

RADEK AND THOR ARE ON THE SAME SIDE IN THE CHALLENGE. RADEK SCORED SIX POINTS. THOR SCORED FIVE POINTS. LUKE IS THE SUPERUSER. HE'S ON THE OTHER SIDE. HE SCORED FOUR POINTS. RADEK IS THE HIGH SCORER. HE BEAT LUKE BY TWO. THOR ALSO BEAT LUKE BY ONE. THEREFORE, THEIR TOTAL MARGIN OF VICTORY IS THREE.

Use the total margin of victory to buy effect and efficiency.

Group Effect

The group can only buy one effect, regardless of their margin of victory or the number of participants.

Group Efficiency

Here's where group challenges get interesting. If you initiate a group challenge and win, total up all of the flow your side invested. Give efficiency rebates based on that total, rather than on each individual contribution.

RADEK AND THOR EACH INVESTED 10 FLOW IN THIS CHALLENGE. THAT MEANS THEIR SIDE INVESTED 20 FLOW TOTAL. IF THEY PAY ONE POINT FOR A FLOW REBATE, THEY EACH GET BACK 25% OF 20 – 5 POINTS EACH. IF THEY PAY FOR TWO POINTS OF FLOW REBATE, THEY GET 50% OF THEIR INVESTMENT BACK – IN THIS CASE, THEY EACH WOULD GET BACK 10 FLOW. THAT'S EQUAL TO THE AMOUNT THEY EACH INVESTED.

IF RADEK AND THOR COULD INVEST THREE POINTS IN A FLOW REBATE, THEY WOULD GET 75% OF 20 BACK AFTER THE CHALLENGE. THAT'D BE 15 POINTS. FIVE MORE THAN WHAT THEY STARTED WITH! THE AGGREGATE REWARDS COOPERATION.

Tying a Group Challenge

Ties in a group challenge work the same as ties in a standard challenge. If there's a tie, the group can buy two effects as per the standard tie rules.

Sudden Death in a Tied Group Challenge

If you go into the sudden death phase of a tie, each side designates one user as its representative. Those two users draw against each other to break the tie as per the sudden death overtime rules.

SUPERUSER

LET'S SKIP TO THE END TO SEE HOW EVERYTHING TURNS OUT. LENIN HAS ONE POINT, YOU HAVE TWO AND RAY HAS FOUR. THAT MEANS YOU HAVE MARGIN OF VICTORY 1. RAY HAS MARGIN OF VICTORY 3. ADD THOSE TOGETHER TO GET THE GROUP'S MARGIN OF VICTORY: 4.

JARED

ACCEPTING A GIFT MUST BE A COMPLEX GESTURE, SO I WILL SPEND 3 POINTS ON EFFECT. THAT LEAVES 1 POINT FOR EFFICIENCY.

RAY

SWEET VICTORY. 1 POINT OF EFFICIENCY GETS US A 25% REBATE OF OUR TOTAL INVESTMENT OF 10. THAT'S 2.5 ROUNDED TO 3 FLOW. WE EACH GET BACK 3 FLOW, AND LENIN MERENGUÉ ACCEPTS THE GIFT.

Bugs from a Group Challenge

The losing side of the group challenge gets all of the bugs from the winning side's hands. Divide the bugs as fairly as possible among the losers.

MOVING ON

Once you've determined a challenge's effect, stop for a moment and discuss the result with the users and the superuser. Feel free to make declarations of revenge if you lost, and paeans to victory if you won.

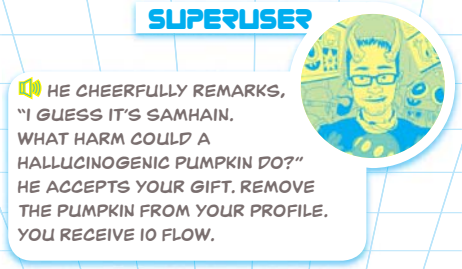
It's likely that the challenge changed something about you, your friends or your MRCZ. It's entirely possible that the challenge left some loose ends, maybe even created more problems than it solved. Dive right in. Talk about what you're doing now to prepare for the next challenge. Who do you talk to? What do you do?

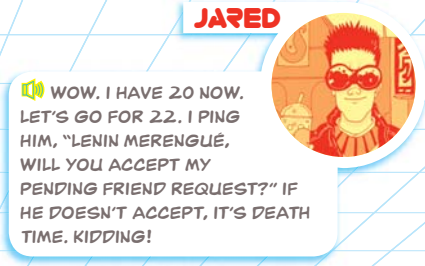
FLOW

FreeMarket's economy is reputation-based. We don't use money. Though people negotiate and trade, we don't have a true barter economy—one chicken isn't worth three hoverskates or anything like that. We earn and spend social capital; our social capital is called flow. You earn flow by being a positive, efficient, cooperative contributor to station life. You spend flow when you make stuff, conflict with other users or even just earn someone's disapproval.

This may be paradise, but station resources are very limited—especially bandwidth and space. The Originals wrote a sophisticated algorithm—which we now call the Aggregate—to monitor those resources and apportion their use based on the reputation economy. Everyone gets enough to live on, but if you want more, you need to earn social capital and raise your standing. Once you have capital, you don't keep it. You spend it on your activities and endeavors—you use it to gain more access to station resources.

This flow economy changes everything. If it seems strange or curious to you, you're on the right track. Whether you're interested or skeptical, it's hard for offmarket folks to imagine just how different our lives are. We don't work—we don't have to. We do what we do because we want to. Are we a culture of selfish hedonists?


SUPERUSER
HE CHEERFULLY REMARKS, "I GUESS IT'S SAMHAIN. WHAT HARM COULD A HALLUCINOGENIC PUMPKIN DO?" HE ACCEPTS YOUR GIFT. REMOVE THE PUMPKIN FROM YOUR PROFILE. YOU RECEIVE 10 FLOW.


JARED
WOW. I HAVE 20 NOW. LET'S GO FOR 22. I PING HIM, "LENIN MERENGUÉ, WILL YOU ACCEPT MY PENDING FRIEND REQUEST?" IF HE DOESN'T ACCEPT, IT'S DEATH TIME. KIDDING!

Quite the contrary. Most folks on the station are generous and helpful, because generosity and cooperation earn you social capital.

We have our share of narcissists and megalomaniacs, but it's hard for them to earn flow, so they don't crop up often. Those who game or abuse the flow system eventually find themselves in a losing battle against the amorphous collective of the station itself. Positive behaviors are reinforced and folks who grief the other users have their influence cut down until they can no longer cause problems. Flow gives station culture the habits of a giant, multicellular, self-correcting organism.

FLOW POSITIVE

You earn flow by gifting, friending, cooperating, fulfilling contracts and being given an attaboy.

Gifting

If you give another user tech or data that you currently own, or an install an interface for them, then you receive a boost of 10 flow.

You cannot gift items to users within your own MRCZ. It's like giving a present to yourself. A nice gesture, but not worth any flow. And you can only receive the flow boost from a gift once, no matter how many times you give it away.

Friending

If you friend another user and he accepts your offer, you both earn 2 flow. You may only earn this boost once per user. If you friend someone, then defriend and later refriend, you don't earn 2 flow from refriending.

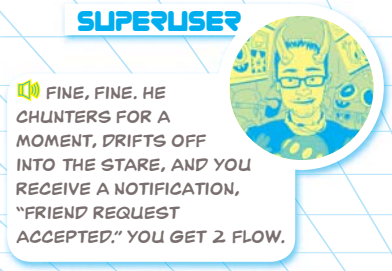
Once you're friends, you can see each other's locations, read each other's personal feeds and have access to a friends-only communication channel. Be careful who you friend.

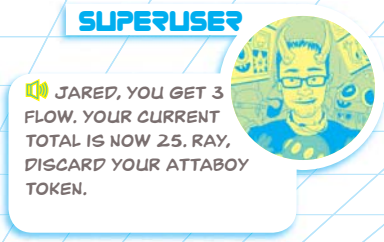
Friending also makes you part of a social-insurance network. See the Social Insurance heading in this chapter for more information.

Friend Requests

In order to friend a user, simply ping him with a friend request. He can accept, decline or leave the request pending.

If you'd like to friend another person on the station, you may send a friend request via the superuser. He may accept, decline or leave the request pending. The superuser will track the flow for that person.


SUPERUSER
FINE, FINE. HE CHUNTERS FOR A MOMENT, DRIFTS OFF INTO THE STARE, AND YOU RECEIVE A NOTIFICATION, "FRIEND REQUEST ACCEPTED." YOU GET 2 FLOW.



The Hazards of Friendship

If you attempt to break, ghost, flood/bleed or switch one of your friends, the superuser gives you a free bug that you must use in this challenge's initial draw.

The reverse is true as well. If one of your friends attempts to break, ghost, flood/bleed or switch you, he starts with an extra bug.

Cooperating

You cooperate when you initiate a group challenge with another user against the superuser or other users. If you win said group challenge, you are rewarded with an increased efficiency rebate.

Total up all of the flow your side invested. You receive efficiency rebates based on that total, rather than on each individual contribution.

Contracts

Fulfilling the terms of a negotiated, key-signed and agreed-upon contract earns 5 flow. Contracts are formed as the result of a negotiations challenge.

Attaboys

At the start of each session, each user and the superuser takes an attaboy token and sets it down next to him on the table. During the session, you may give that token to another user or the superuser. The recipient adds 3 flow to his current total. Once given, the token is discarded.

Traditionally, we grant attaboys when another user entertains us with stunning drama or hilarious comedy.

You can only receive one attaboy per session.

Unused Attaboys

Attaboys can't be saved session to session. They are discarded and the tokens collected by the superuser.

FLOW NEGATIVE

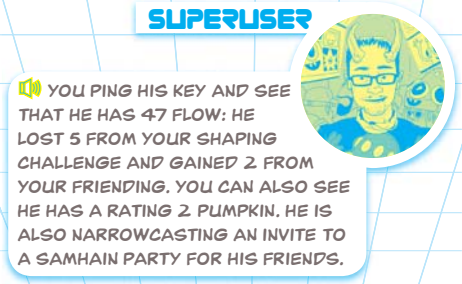
You can lose or spend flow in five ways: challenges, defriending, frownies, leaving your MRCZ and social insurance.

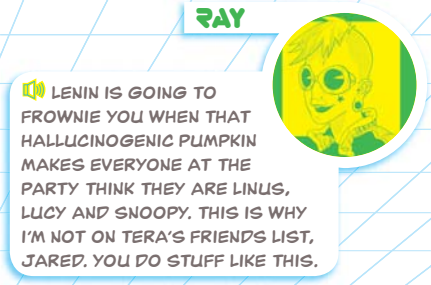
Challenges

Each challenge requires an investment of flow from both the initiator and the target.

Risking More Flow Than You Have

You can risk more flow than you currently have. Factor your final total at the end of the challenge—after any efficiency rebates have been determined. If your flow is still positive, then you're clear. If your flow is 0 or negative, see the Flow Debt heading in this chapter.


SUPERUSER
YOU PING HIS KEY AND SEE THAT HE HAS 47 FLOW: HE LOST 5 FROM YOUR SHAPING CHALLENGE AND GAINED 2 FROM YOUR FRIENDING. YOU CAN ALSO SEE HE HAS A RATING 2 PUMPKIN. HE IS ALSO NARROWCASTING AN INVITE TO A SAMHAIN PARTY FOR HIS FRIENDS.


RAY
LENIN IS GOING TO FROWNIE YOU WHEN THAT HALLUCINOGENIC PUMPKIN MAKES EVERYONE AT THE PARTY THINK THEY ARE LINUS, LUCY AND SNOOPY. THIS IS WHY I'M NOT ON TERA'S FRIENDS LIST, JARED. YOU DO STUFF LIKE THIS.

And to be clear, the target in a targeted challenge can never risk more flow than he has. The initiator can risk any amount of flow, even if it's more than he can currently afford.

How Much Does it Cost to Initiate and Win?

If you initiate and win, you must pay your initial investment, but you can also earn a rebate for efficiency. Round up any fractions.

- Spending one point of your challenge margin of victory on efficiency earns a 25% rebate on your initial investment.
- Spending two points of your margin of victory earns a 50% rebate.
- Spending three points of your margin of victory earns a 75% rebate.

How Much Does it Cost to Initiate and Lose?

If you initiate a challenge and lose, you pay the full initial investment. No rebate is possible.

Taking a Hit as the Target

If you were the target, and you lost a challenge, you lose flow equal to the initiator's investment.

If you were the target, and you won a challenge, you don't lose any flow.

Defriending

It costs 2 flow to remove a friend from your friends list. This penalty is enforced each time you remove a friend.

IF YOU ADDED SOMEONE, REMOVED THEM, READDED AND THEN REMOVED THEM AGAIN, THAT EARNED YOU 2 FLOW AND COST YOU 4.

Frownies

Giving a frownie is a signal that you're unhappy with another user. Conversely, if you receive a frownie, someone's displeased with you. Superusers and users may give frownies.

Anyone can give a frownie at any time. A frownie deducts 3 flow from the targeted user's total.

You may only place one frownie per user per session, but you can frownie any number of users. That means, you can issue 12 frownies to 12 different people, but you can only give your mom one frownie per session.

I'll Make it Up to You

Frownies can be rescinded. If you can convince the user who frownied you to forgive you before the session is over, you regain 3 flow and the frownie is cleared. If he remains unconvinced at the end of the session, then the frownie is applied and the flow is lost permanently. You can be frownied again by this person.

There's a Bottom to the Barrel

A frownie may never reduce your target's flow total below 1. If the frownie would reduce the target's flow to 0 or lower, it's reduced to 1 instead.

JARED
RAY, YOU COULD SWITCH ME WITH RAFE FROM MISSING FOUNDATION SO HE GETS ALL THE FROWNIES. YOU ONLY HAVE TO INVEST 50 FLOW FOR THE ATTEMPT!

RAY
I COULD, BUT I WON'T. MY FLOW'S WORSE THAN YOURS, APPLESEEDER. WHY DON'T YOU GO TO THE PARTY IN A PLUCKY COSTUME AND ENSURE THEY ALL HAVE PLEASANT MEMORIES?

Leaving Your MRCZ

Leaving your MRCZ—removing your name from the members list—costs 4 flow.

Social Insurance

Social insurance is a big issue on the station. It's discussed under its own heading in this

FLOW CLASS

Challenges require a flow investment from all involved parties. Without flow, you can't initiate a challenge.

There are three different categories—or classes—for the investment required by a challenge: Aggregate, targeted, and material. Each has its own cost structure.

Aggregate Challenges

Aggregate challenges require an investment of 50 flow from the initiator. The Aggregate never initiates a challenge. If the Aggregate acts, assume it is successful with effect 3 unless a user initiates a challenge against it. The Aggregate does not need flow to defend itself from attack.

Switching, breaking and ghosting can all be used to challenge the Aggregate.

Targeted Challenges

Flood/bleeding, shaping, ghosting, negotiations, social engineering and wetwork are all targeted challenges.

In a targeted challenge, the targeted user sets the flow investment for the initiator. The flow investment may not exceed the target's current flow.

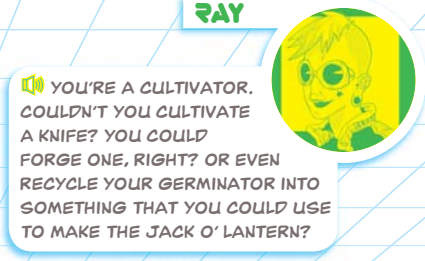
Remember, if the target wins this challenge, the initiator has to pay that amount and the target does not. If the initiator wins, the target pays the full amount and the initiator may get a rebate for efficiency.

Self-Targeted

Ephemera and thin slicing are self-targeted challenges. The user must overcome internal bias in order to win these challenges.

For self-targeted challenges, the user always initiates and the superuser always plays the

SUPERUSER
IF YOU WERE A PRINTER, YOU COULD PRINT A KNIFE FOR 3 FLOW—DUMB MATERIAL, SIMPLE AND HANDHELD—AND TAG IT WITH RECYCLING. THEN YOU COULD USE IT TO CARVE A JACK O' LANTERN.


RAY
YOU'RE A CULTIVATOR. COULDN'T YOU CULTIVATE A KNIFE? YOU COULD FORGE ONE, RIGHT? OR EVEN RECYCLE YOUR GERMINATOR INTO SOMETHING THAT YOU COULD USE TO MAKE THE JACK O' LANTERN?

target. The superuser sets the flow investment up to, but not exceeding, the user's current flow. If the user wins, he may spend margin of victory for efficiency. If the user loses, he pays the full amount of the investment without rebate.

Material Challenges

Material challenge flow costs are based on what the user is building or making, how complex it is and what the materials cost. There are discrete costs for these types of experiences.

Cultivation, mobbing, printing, recycling and sometimes breaking are material challenges.

Breaking

The materials cost for a breaking challenge is dependent on the type of tech being attacked. Reference the experience tag for the tech or interface and consult the table at right for the flow cost of the challenge.

Breaking Materials Challenge	Flow Cost
Wetwork	3
Switching	4
Ghosting	5
Flood/Bleeding	6
Breaking	7
Social Engineering	8
Shaping	9
Ephemera	10
Cultivation	15
Thin Slicing	20
Mobbing	25
Printing	30
Negotiations	35
Recycling	40

Cultivation Flow Costs

Pick the item that closest matches your goal for this cultivation challenge. If your goal isn't listed, the superuser may choose a related, applicable cost.

Cultivation Materials Challenges		Flow Cost
Plant	Potted plant	2
	Garden, tree	10
	Field, grove	30
Animal	Pet	5
	Litter	20
	Herd	100
Material	Raw, unrefined	4
	Lightly refined	7
	Industrial, heavily refined	40
Machine	Simple machine	3
	Clockwork	8
	Engine	50

SUPERUSER
YOU JUST GIFTED THE PUMPKIN TO LENIN MERENGUÉ AND NOW YOU WANT IT BACK. BAD MANNERS ON FREEMARKET, MY FRIEND. YOU'LL HAVE TO USE SOCIAL ENGINEERING OR GHOSTING TO GET IT FROM HIM BEFORE THE PARTY.

JARED
OH! IF I GOT THE PUMPKIN BACK, I COULD MERGE IT WITH THE GERMINATOR AND MAKE A MECHANICAL, LAUGHING GNOME O' LANTERN. THAT'D COST ME 9 FLOW—DUMB MATERIAL AND ELECTRONIC SOURCES WITH AN ELECTRONIC FINAL PRODUCT.

Mobbing Flow Costs

Choose from the appropriate category below based on your goal for this challenge.

Mobbing Materials Challenges	Flow Cost
Mobbing, upgrading or changing tags on keysofts	4
Upgrading or changing tags on interface hardware	6
Mobbing new interface hardware	8

Printing Flow Costs

Consult the table at right for printing flow investments. Add the appropriate values from each category—base, complexity and size—to determine the flow cost.

Printing Materials Challenges	Flow Cost
Base Material	
Dumb material	1
Smart material	3
Complexity	
Simple, nonfunctional, single piece	1
Mechanical (simple machine, clockwork or engine-like)	3
Nanological	10
Size	
Handheld	1
Dog-sized	2
Man-sized	4
Refrigerator-sized	5
Needs-its-own-dedicated-room-sized	10

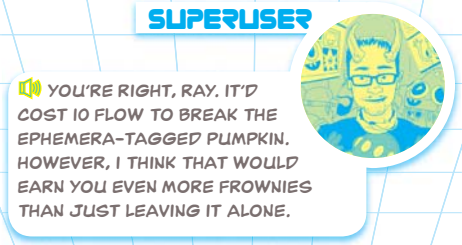
Dumb materials are things like food, wood, metal, glass—no circuitry, interface or function beyond physical existence. Smart materials can talk to you, run self-diagnostics, tell you the time or how old they are, etc. Most of the station is made up of smart materials.

Nanologics are smart materials that have been formed into semi-autonomous devices like pet monkeys, terminator robots or drone sweeps. Nanologic complexity requires smart materials as the base.

Recycling Flow Costs

You use recycling to repair broken or burned-out technology, or to merge two extant pieces of technology. Choose which mode you're using.

If repairing, use the flow costs listed at right based on the type of tech you're repairing. Dumb materials include stuff like walls, pipes or even a simple metal sword. Electronics


SUPERUSER
YOU'RE RIGHT, RAY. IT'D COST 10 FLOW TO BREAK THE EPHEMERA-TAGGED PUMPKIN. HOWEVER, I THINK THAT WOULD EARN YOU EVEN MORE FROWNIES THAN JUST LEAVING IT ALONE.

JARED
WELL, THERE'S A CHANCE THAT IT MIGHT JUST ADD TO THE FESTIVITIES. AFTER ALL, IT'S FOR ZERO DAY. THINGS ARE EXPECTED TO GET A LITTLE CRAZY. I SAY WE JUST LEAVE IT.

(really, microelectronics) comprise most tech on the station. Nanologicals are advanced tech like mobs, smart materials, automata and sweeps.

Recycling: Repair Materials Challenges	Flow Cost
Dumb material	1
Simple machine	2
Clockwork	3
Engine	4
Electronic	6
Nanological	8

If merging two pieces of technology, use the flow costs listed in the Merging Tech table on the next page. Choose the source based on the tech you are trying to recycle: If the two pieces are of the same type, choose one source. If the two pieces are of different types, choose two sources and add the flow cost listed for each.

Whether the pieces are the same or different, add the source flow cost to the product flow cost for your total flow investment.

Recycling: Merging Tech Materials Challenges			
Source(s)	*Flow*	*Product*	*Flow*
Dumb material	0	Dumb material	1
Simple machine	1	Simple machine	2
Clockwork	2	Clockwork	3
Engine	3	Engine	4
Electronic	4	Electronic	5
Nanological	5	Nanological	6

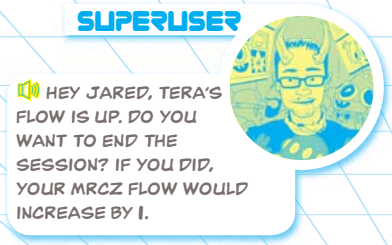
MRCZ FLOW

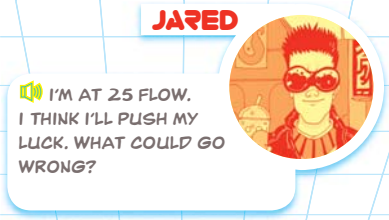
MRCZs have their own flow rating separate from—but tied to—their members' ratings.

Starting MRCZ Flow

When a MRCZ is founded, it starts with flow equal to the lowest total among its founders. Add to this base a bonus for each of the following experiences included in the MRCZ tags:

MRCZ Tags	Bonus
Negotiation	+3
Recycling	+3
Thin Slicing	+3
Cultivation	+2
Mobbing	+2
Printing	+2
Breaking	+1
Ephemera	+1
Flood/Bleeding	+1





MRCZ Tags	Bonus
Ghosting	+1
Shaping	+1
Social Engineering	+1
Switching	+1
Wetwork	+1
Other	+0

Earning MRCZ Flow

At the end of a session, look at all of the members of your MRCZ. For each member whose flow ended higher than it started, add 1 to the MRCZ's flow total.

Losing MRCZ Flow

At the end of a session, check the flow rating of your MRCZ. For each member whose flow ended lower than it started, deduct 1 from the MRCZ flow total.

If your flow ends at the same level it started, you don't affect your MRCZ's flow total this session.

Tier Challenges

MRCZ flow isn't used for regular challenges. It's not a reservoir for members to draw from. It's only used for one thing—tier challenges. All MRCZs are tiered from 1 to 7. Tier 1 MRCZs are allocated the least amount of resources, whereas tier 7 MRCZs are allotted the greatest share of station resources. You use a tier challenge to try to raise your MRCZ from one tier to the next. See the MRCZ chapter for the complete rules for tier challenges.

FLOW DEBT

It is possible to spend more flow than you have. At the end of a challenge, if your flow is 0 or negative, you're in flow debt. The kids call it "tanking."

Tanked Flow

You've tanked your flow—dropped it to 0 or less—and now you're in a spot of trouble.

If you have social insurance, it kicks in at the end of the challenge in which you tanked—after efficiency is factored. If social insurance does not raise you above zero, you are put up for a stationwide vote. See the Voted Off the Station section on the following page.

You may not initiate any challenges while at 0 or in the negative. You may be targeted in challenges. If so targeted, the default minimum flow investment is 1. You can't set the level any higher than that. You're quite vulnerable.

You may gift, friend, fulfill contracts and receive attaboys while at 0 or negative flow.

RAY

I WAS ONCE PUT UP FOR A STATIONWIDE VOTE. IT'S UNPLEASANT. YOU REALLY FIND OUT WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE.

SUPERUSER

THANKS, RAY. ANYWAY, LET'S SKIP AHEAD. JARED, LET'S SAY TERA ATTEMPTED TO GHOST THE PUMPKIN FROM THE PARTY. LENIN SET THE FLOW INVESTMENT TO 30 FLOW FOR THAT CHALLENGE. SINCE YOU LOST, YOU HAVE TO PAY THE FULL AMOUNT. YOU'RE NOW AT -5 FLOW.

JARED

WHAT?! THAT IS LESS THAN ZERO. THAT'S BAD. DO I GET KICKED OFF THE STATION NOW? AM I DONE? WAIT! AREN'T MY FRIENDS SUPPOSED TO HELP ME? LENIN, BABY, COME ON.

Voted Off the Station

If your flow drops to 0 or below and social insurance can't put you in the positive, the Aggregate posts your profile to the inbox of every emancipated resident of the station. The post describes the circumstances that led to your flow debt. The post also charts all of your recent activity on the station.

Each resident on the station then gets to vote either to allow you to remain on the station or to deport you. The vote is decided at the end of the session. Voting mechanics are described below and in the superuser section.

If the vote goes in your favor, then you receive enough flow to put you at 1. There is no other consequence aside from a little infamy.

If you're voted off the station, Aggregate security sweeps collect you and your belongings and escort you to the Hole. In the Hole, your key is deactivated; your data, memories and backups are archived. You are put on a lifeboat and fired off in the direction of your choosing—Earth, Mars, Liberty Station or wherever. You may never return to the station in any form or guise.

Voting

If a session ends and you have 0 or negative flow, your fate must be determined. Before you reshuffle the challenge decks, the superuser draws a single card from his challenge deck. If it's a FreeMarket card, the vote goes in your favor. Congrats. Your flow is now 1. You can stay!

If the superuser draws a hazard, you have been voted off the station. Sorry. Thanks for playing! Where would you like to go?

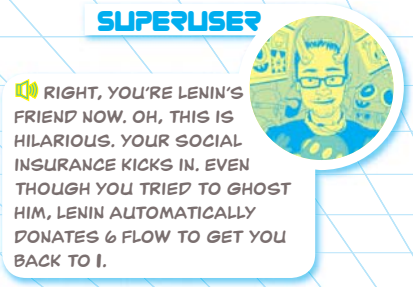
If the superuser draws an experience or geneline card, the vote is ongoing. Residents have failed to vote or have abstained. You earn a brief reprieve. You begin the next session at your current flow rating—0 or negative. If your flow is still at 0 or negative at the end of the next session, you are put up for another vote as described above.

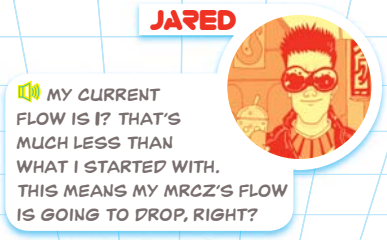
SOCIAL INSURANCE

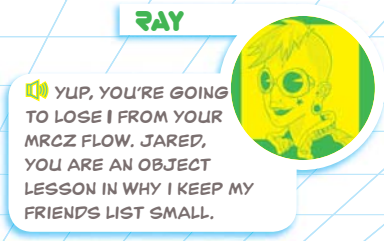
Social insurance—you've heard a lot about it, but what is it?

Whenever you friend someone, you also agree to be a part of their social insurance network. Should your friend's flow drop to zero or below, you agree to donate your own flow in order to bolster him. This goes both ways. If your flow tanks, your friends agree to give you a point or two in order to get you back on your feet.

Flow is donated one point at a time starting with the oldest friend and moving down the list to the most recent friend. If one round of donations isn't enough, the deductions continue in order until your friend's flow is back up to 1.


SUPERUSER
RIGHT, YOU'RE LENIN'S FRIEND NOW. OH, THIS IS HILARIOUS. YOUR SOCIAL INSURANCE KICKS IN. EVEN THOUGH YOU TRIED TO GHOST HIM, LENIN AUTOMATICALLY DONATES 6 FLOW TO GET YOU BACK TO 1.





Social insurance deductions never reduce your flow to 0. Deductions always stop at 1.

If the social insurance of your friend network cannot cover a debt, then no flow is deducted from your friends at all. So if you are at -50, but your two friends only have 30 between them, no flow is deducted from their accounts, and you may be voted off.

Cutting Costs

If you feel like the cost of friendship is too great, you may defriend someone even as social insurance is being activated. If you've already deducted flow for social insurance in this instance, you don't get it back. But you're protected from losing further flow due to this friend's activities!

The superuser deducts a point of flow from the first friend on the user's friends list, then the second friend, then the third, and so on, until the user's flow reaches 1. Once the end of the friends list is reached, if the user is still in debt, then this process starts again at the top of the list. You can opt out of this process by defriending the user before your turn comes up.

If you're the user's only friend, you cannot preemptively opt out. Either you donate enough flow to bring the user to 1, or you don't have enough to get him there and no flow changes hands. Your friend remains in debt.

Don't forget that defriending costs 2 flow.

MRCZs

MULTIREGIONAL CULTURAL ZONE

Back when the station was still being built, it was important to break down barriers to get everyone to cooperate and work together. It's not that we were all infighting and intriguing, but more a recognition that it's scary out here in space, and it's hard to break old habits. One of the Originals came up with the idea of dividing the station into areas, putting one expert from each discipline into each area, and making it his responsibility to maintain the area by his expertise. She called these areas "multiregional cultural zones," a bureaucratic safe word intended to threaten no one. She was also Russian and an avowed fan of Tarkovsky.

ADHOCRACY

However clumsy the original effort, the ethos of forming groups to maintain the station as needed has remained with us. A long time ago, futurist Alvin Toffler dubbed a society of this type an "adhocracy." In this context, groups form to serve a specific purpose and disband when that purpose is fulfilled.

The adhocracy suited our needs perfectly and dovetailed nicely with other ideas about the growing reputation economy.

JARED
HEY RAY, YOU WANT TO JOIN MY MRCZ, THE GARDEN PARTY? I'M IN NEED OF MEMBERS!
RAY
NO WAY, YOU JOIN MINE. YOU'RE BAD AT THIS.
JARED
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOUR MRCZ DOES. ISN'T YOUR MRCZ'S PURPOSE, "WALK AROUND AND MAKE RAY LOOK COOL?" ANYWAY, I CAN'T DISBAND MY OWN MRCZ, I ONLY HAVE I FLOW. I'D TANK AND LENIN WILL DEFRIEND ME. AND THEN, I GET A SPACESHIP...

MRCZS ON FREEMARKET

The reputation economy blossomed into flow, and "multiregional cultural zones" evolved into what we call MRCZs (pronounced "mercy" in the singular and "mercies" in the plural).

Anyone can form a MRCZ. All you have to do is register with the Aggregate and meet some minimal criteria.

When you register, the MRCZ must describe its purpose, tag itself, post its needs and give itself a name. The Aggregate then assigns it a tier and some flow.

Once formed, the Aggregate assigns the MRCZ members a space suitable to their needs in which they can bunk and work. Many folks form MRCZs just so they can move out of the capsule hotels.

The only barrier to forming a MRCZ is the will to do it. This is deliberate. The system wants us all to cooperate and get along. This impetus can lead to a lot of tanking or baselining MRCZs. In order to combat this tendency and clean out the system, the Aggregate routinely reviews underperforming MRCZs. If the MRCZ doesn't meet the qualifications for an active group, it is disbanded. If the MRCZ does pass the review, then it might be allocated more resources!

LEAVING AND JOINING MRCZS

To leave your MRCZ, simply delete your membership account and pay 4 flow. You're out!

If you want to join a MRCZ, you must get the permission of either one founder or a majority of regular members. It doesn't cost any flow to join a MRCZ. You can only be a member of one MRCZ at a time, so if you're currently a member of another group, you have to leave them before you can join a new group.

FORMING A MRCZ

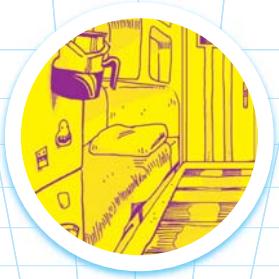
To form a MRCZ, first you must leave any MRCZ of which you are a member. Once that's done, you assemble other users who want to be founders of the new MRCZ. Submit your purpose, tags, needs and name to the Aggregate.

New MRCZs always start at tier 1. New MRCZ flow is based on the lowest of its founders plus bonuses described in the MRCZ Flow section of the Generation chapter, or in the MRCZ section of the Flow chapter.

MRCZ Founders

A MRCZ only needs one founder, but it's useful to have more. It's the founders who petition the Aggregate to advance their MRCZ's tier. The more founders you have, the better chance you have of advancing your tier.

Your MRCZ may have up to four founders.



Founders Leaving a MRCZ

Founders may leave a MRCZ as per the normal rules. So long as one founder remains a member of the MRCZ, the group remains in effect. If all of the founders leave, the MRCZ is disbanded.

Founder status may not be passed down, bequeathed or inherited.

DISBANDING A MRCZ

Your MRCZ is disbanded if it loses an Aggregate review or all of the founders quit the group.

TIERS

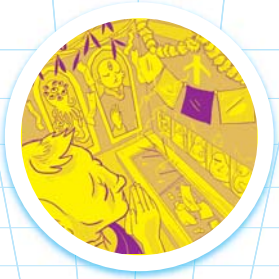
All MRCZs are placed on one of seven tiers. Your tier determines how much space and resources are allocated to your group by the Aggregate. The higher your tier, the more private space you get and the more station resources—like data and printers—are directly apportioned to you. Your MRCZ tier determines the quality of your back ups and puts a hard cap on how many members your status can adequately support. Everyone on the station can't be a member of your MRCZ because you can't house them all within the limits of even a tier 7 MRCZ.

Since FreeMarket is largely an egalitarian place, the differences between a tier 1 and tier 7 MRCZ aren't that great, but they are significant enough to matter.

Unaffiliated

You have access to food and clothing printers, a bunk in a capsule hotel and all of the feeds and channels a girl could dream about. It's a nice life. You can earn flow just like everyone else, but you can't print custom designs, and you don't have access to any space. If you want to tap into those precious resources, it's time to join or form a MRCZ.

There's another symptom of being unaffiliated. When you're unaffiliated, your reversible deaths are limited. One prime back up is maintained which includes your base geneline, experiences and long-term memories. It does not include your interface or any modifications you've made to your geneline or experiences. (Short-term memories are maintained according to the circumstances of your death. A light or heavy death preserves some short-term memories, but a perfect death wipes them out.)



Tier 1 MRCZ (6 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 1 Supported Membership

Four members

Tier 1 Space

Your MRCZ headquarters is a four-person bunk room in a converted cargo container (or similar).

Tier 1 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: one matter printer suitable for printing handheld-sized objects; basic recycling hardware suitable for everything except nanologicals; cultivation materials for a plant, a pet, raw materials or a simple machine; mobbing bench for keysoft installation and upgrades.

Tier 1 Backup

Each member is backed up once upon joining. Users are restored from this backup sans interface or additional modification.

Tier 2 MRCZ (14 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 2 Supported Membership

Eight members

Tier 2 Space

Your MRCZ headquarters is a shared space for up to eight members, usually in the form of a repurposed structure like a shipping container.

Tier 2 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: one matter printer suitable for printing dog-sized objects; recycling hardware suitable for all tasks; cultivation materials for a plant, a pet, raw materials or a clockwork machine; mobbing chair for tweaking existing hardware.

Tier 2 Backup

Your prime backup is updated to current status when your MRCZ achieves tier 2 status. When restoring, no interface or modifications made after this update are kept.

Tier 3 MRCZ (30 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 3 Supported Membership

16 members

Tier 3 Space

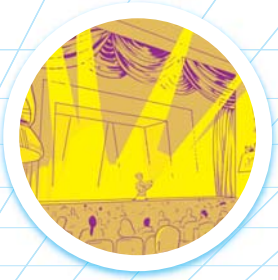
Your MRCZ has shared space for 16 members: dormitory living convertible to office or bullpen-like workspace.

Tier 3 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: one matter printer suitable for printing man-sized objects; recycling hardware suitable for all tasks; cultivation materials for a garden, a pod, lightly refined materials or a clockwork machine; mobbing suite for development and installation of new hardware.

Tier 3 Data

When a MRCZ achieves tier 3 status, each founder of the MRCZ receives one point of data.



Tier 3 Backup

Your backups are updated at the start of each session. Users are restored from this backup sans any in-session modification and without interface.

Tier 4 MRCZ (62 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 4 Supported Membership

32 members

Tier 4 Space

Your MRCZ has living space for 32 members in semiprivate apartments—a series of connected suites for two to four members each—and a small workspace like an office, a garden or workshop.

Tier 4 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: one matter printer suitable for printing refrigerator-sized objects; recycling hardware suitable for all tasks; cultivation materials for a garden, a pod, light materials or a clockwork machine; mobbing suite for development and installation of new hardware.

Tier 4 Data

Each founder receives two points of data when the MRCZ achieves tier 4.

Tier 4 Backup

Your backups are updated at the start of each session. Users are restored from this backup sans any in-session modification and without interface.

Tier 5 MRCZ (126 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 5 Supported Membership

64 members

Tier 5 Space

You have dedicated live-work space for 64 members in one or more structures like a tower or capsule network. Tier 5 Space includes a garden, a small theater, a large workshop or a storage warehouse. It also includes a public area like a street, tramway or skyway.

Tier 5 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: one matter printer suitable for printing room-sized objects; recycling hardware suitable for all tasks; cultivation materials for a garden, a pod, industrial materials or a clockwork machine; mobbing suite for development and installation of new hardware.

Tier 5 Data

Each *member* of the MRCZ receives one point of data upon attaining tier 5.

Tier 5 Backup

Geneline, experience, and long-term memories are updated moment to moment. One interface can be restored from your backup.

Tier 6 MRCZ (254 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 6 Supported Membership

128 members

Tier 6 Space

You have dedicated live-work structure like a tower or capsule network. Structure includes dorms and semiprivate and private living spaces, in addition to a workspace sized to the MRCZ's needs. Tier 6 MRCZs may also request a public recreational space—like a park, a track, a copse of trees or a laser tag warehouse.

Tier 6 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: two matter printers sized to the founders' specifications; recycling hardware suitable for all tasks; cultivation materials for a garden, a pod, industrial materials or an engine; mobbing suite for development and installation of new hardware.

Tier 6 Data

Each member of the MRCZ receives two points of data upon reaching tier 6.

Tier 6 Backup

Geneline, experience and long-term memories are updated moment to moment. Two interfaces can be restored from your backup.

Tier 7 MRCZ (298 MRCZ Flow)

Tier 7 Supported Membership

256 members

Tier 7 Space

Tier 7 MRCZs have a dedicated structure like a tower, pod network or other suitable building at their disposal. They have enough living space to house their members in semiprivate and private apartments. They have a large workshop, performance space, or plot of land; sized appropriately to their tags and needs. They also have a public space that they maintain, like a street, a lot, a monorail or tramway, a section of the Hole or low-g section of the ring.

Tier 7 Resources

Your MRCZ has at its disposal: three matter printers sized to the founders' specifications; recycling hardware suitable for all tasks; cultivation materials for a field, a herd, industrial materials or an engine; mobbing suite for development and installation of new hardware.

Tier 7 Data

Each member of the MRCZ receives one point of data per session.

Tier 7 Backup

Geneline, experience, long-term memories, interface and all modifications are updated moment to moment. Prime backup is updated at user request.

SUPERUSER

OKAY, LET'S SKIP AHEAD TWO SESSIONS. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE PARTY, YOU'VE MADE SOME FRIENDS AND ADDED SOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE GARDEN PARTY MRCZ. YOUR MRCZ FLOW IS NOW UP TO 14.

JARED

RIGHT! I WANT TO DO A TIER CHALLENGE FOR THE GARDEN PARTY. I HAVE TO RISK ALL 14 OF MY MRCZ FLOW. THIS BETTER BE WORTH IT.

SUPERUSER

YOU'RE THE ONLY FOUNDER, SO YOU HAVE TO GO THIS ALONE. IF RAY HAD FOUNDED GARDEN PARTY WITH YOU, SHE COULD TEAM UP AS IN A GROUP CHALLENGE. BUT SHE DIDN'T, SO SHE CAN'T.

TIER CHALLENGES

How does your MRCZ advance in tier? Your founders take up a tier challenge. You must measure your MRCZ's conduct and contributions against criteria set forth by the Aggregate while defending against criticism from other MRCZs with similar tags.

A tier challenge is similar to a regular challenge. You initiate, risk your flow, and play cards to win. There are some differences that make it very interesting though!

Calling for a Tier Challenge

Founders can call for a tier challenge at any point in the session. Doing so triggers the end-of-session process. Go through all of the end-of-session stuff, but do not reshuffle your decks. Instead, once you've settled accounts for the session, go directly to the tier challenge.

Risk MRCZ Flow

Your MRCZ must risk flow equal to the minimum amount listed with the next higher tier. Flow costs are listed with each tier. You may only advance one tier at a time.

IF YOU WANT TO CLIMB FROM TIER 1 TO TIER 2, YOUR MRCZ MUST RISK 14 FLOW.

Group Challenge

A tier challenge involves all of the founders of the MRCZ who are currently members. This usually makes tier challenges group challenges. If there's only one active founder, then it's not a group challenge. Otherwise, each founder gets to take actions and play, as in a group challenge.

The Aggregate notifies the founders of the challenge via their keys. The challenge is conducted remotely. You don't have to go to court or anything. Users do not invest their individual flow in a review challenge.

SUPERUSER
THE AGGREGATE OPENS A REVIEW CHANNEL. ANONYMOUS USERS LOG ON TO OFFER COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK. WE RUN THIS LIKE A NORMAL CHALLENGE, BUT WITH THE RESTRICTIONS BELOW.

JARED
LOOK AT THAT: SINCE I TANKED MY FLOW, YOU GET TO USE TECH AGAINST ME. WELL, SUPERUSER, LET'S TAKE THIS OFFLINE THEN. WE DON'T WANT TO BORE OUR READERS WITH ANOTHER LOPSIDED CHALLENGE.

Initiating Ability

You may initiate with any experience listed in your MRCZ's tags. If you do not have any experiences listed in your tags, then you may initiate with your geneline, so long as you have a geneline tag related to the MRCZ tag.

If none of the above applies, then you may only score on FreeMarket cards as per the Go Free heading in the Challenges chapter.

Supporting Ability

Experience may be used to support geneline if the experience matches one of the MRCZ's tags. Geneline may be used to support experience if the geneline and MRCZ tags are related or if the MRCZ tags are part of any of your long-term memory concepts.

Technology and Interface in Tier Challenges

Tech and interface are not used in tier challenges. Thus the engage tech and recalibrate actions are unavailable to the users.

Airing Grievances Special Action

During a tier challenge, the founders have access to a special action called airing grievances. Instead of using a go for it, support or burn action, you can air grievances. To do so, denounce, declaim or denigrate one of your fellow founders, or the MRCZ as a whole.

Once you have publicly decried their flaws, you may discard the hazard in your hand and take bugs equal to the discarded cards. You may use these bugs in future actions during this challenge.

Superuser in a Tier Challenge

As the superuser, you take on the role of the Aggregate and a panel of anonymous MRCZ founders who are reviewing the progress of the users' MRCZ. Be skeptical and critical, supportive and snarky.

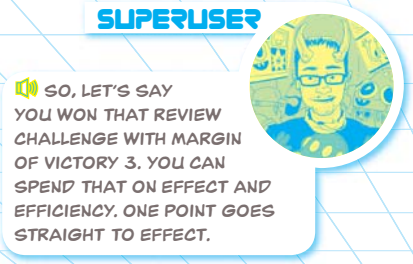
Superuser Tier Challenge Experience and Geneline

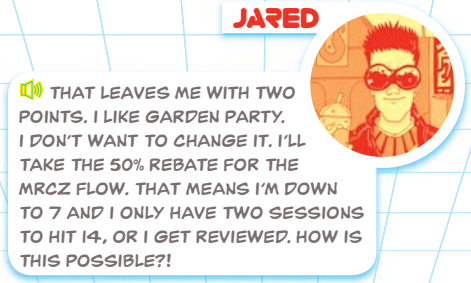
As the superuser, you have geneline 2 and experience 2 abilities appropriate to the challenge at your disposal.

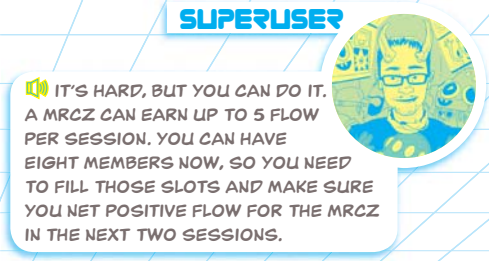
The superuser cannot use the burn action in this challenge.

You've Been Bad

If any founder in the tier challenge has tanked his flow since the last review, the superuser may use the engage tech action. You may use the action once per tanking. So if two members tanked, you get two draws from the tech deck should you wish to use them.


SUPERUSER
SO, LET'S SAY YOU WON THAT REVIEW CHALLENGE WITH MARGIN OF VICTORY 3. YOU CAN SPEND THAT ON EFFECT AND EFFICIENCY. ONE POINT GOES STRAIGHT TO EFFECT.


JARED
THAT LEAVES ME WITH TWO POINTS. I LIKE GARDEN PARTY. I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE IT. I'LL TAKE THE 50% REBATE FOR THE MRCZ FLOW. THAT MEANS I'M DOWN TO 7 AND I ONLY HAVE TWO SESSIONS TO HIT 14, OR I GET REVIEWED. HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?!


SUPERUSER
IT'S HARD, BUT YOU CAN DO IT. A MRCZ CAN EARN UP TO 5 FLOW PER SESSION. YOU CAN HAVE EIGHT MEMBERS NOW, SO YOU NEED TO FILL THOSE SLOTS AND MAKE SURE YOU NET POSITIVE FLOW FOR THE MRCZ IN THE NEXT TWO SESSIONS.

The Aggregate keeps files on the flow and behavior of all of the users. It will produce records from its databases to bolster its case for review.

MRCZ Wins Tier Challenge

Tier Challenge Effect

If you win your tier challenge, you must spend one point of your margin of victory to advance to the next tier. Additional points can be spent to alter your MRCZ or earn an efficiency rebate.

You may spend one point to change a MRCZ tag. You may spend multiple points on multiple tags. You may spend one point to change a MRCZ need. You may spend multiple points to change multiple needs. You may spend one point of your margin of victory to change your MRCZ's purpose or name.

Tier Challenge Efficiency

You may spend your margin of victory on efficiency to earn a flow rebate for your MRCZ flow as per the standard percentages. The rebate is only earned against the investment. No group challenge rebate rules are in effect here.

Aggregate Review

If your MRCZ flow is below your tier's minimum flow value (listed with each tier) for two sessions, the Aggregate automatically reviews your MRCZ. This review happens either at the end of the second session or at the beginning of the third.

In this case, the MRCZ is the target, and the Aggregate is the initiator. The MRCZ must risk flow equal to the minimum for its current tier, even if this could put it in the negative if you lose.

The Aggregate operates with experience 2 and geneline 2. This operates like a tier challenge. If the MRCZ wins, you remain a group and have two more sessions to elevate your flow to the correct level. If the MRCZ loses, it is reduced by one tier. If a tier 1 MRCZ loses a review, it is disbanded on the spot.

One consolation—in this case, you don't have to pay the 4 flow for leaving your MRCZ.

JARED

AP'S BOOKS ARE FILLED WITH HIGH-FLOW MERCENARIES, LONE OPERATIVES, BLANK NINJA ASSASSINS AND IMMIGRANT LEG BREAKERS, EACH PERFECTLY SUITED TO HANDLE THE MRCZ'S AFFAIRS IN TIMES OF NEED.

SAIF

ARACHNE IS A SMALL MRCZ, COMPOSED OF A DOZEN TALENTED PRINTERS, CULTIVATORS AND RECYCLERS. IT RECENTLY SUFFERED A DEFECTION OF MEMBERS WHO LEFT TO FORM A NEOPURIST CULTIVATION MRCZ CALLED 3THREADS.

CARLY

THE COWBOYS GET THEIR NAME FROM THE DIAMOND THEY USE IN THEIR MINING OPERATIONS. THE TIPS OF THEIR MASSIVE ROBOTIC DRILLING RIGS ARE MANUFACTURED ON FREEMARKET USING PRINTING TECHNOLOGY.

CROSS SECTION OF MRCZS

AFFILIATED PARTNERSHIPS (TIER 6)

Purpose: Our MRCZ's focus is on matching talented personnel with the clients in need of their skills and services.

Tags: Negotiation, clean, ruthless

Needs: Wetwork, technology, contractors

Background: Affiliated Partnerships is a service-oriented group that, on the surface, matches clients with contractors. Their specialties are wetwork, switching and other shadowy operations. This MRCZ doesn't care to risk flow loss by getting its hands dirty and maintains a veneer of sophistication, gentility and protocol by outsourcing these activities. In reality, its ruthlessness is legendary.

Yamaguchi Isao, Ruthless Negotiations Maven					
Generation	1st	MRCZ Tier	6	Geneline	1
Experience	2	Interface	2	Tech	2

ARACHNE TEXTILES (TIER 2)

Purpose: To supply FreeMarket with high-grade textiles and cutting-edge fashion.

Tags: Printing, textiles, fashion

Needs: Thin-slicing, goat-silk, showroom space

Background: Arachne Textiles prides itself on its simple and elegant designs: monosuits made of goat-silk embedded with nanoprocessors and chromatophores. A swatch of their cloth can stretch up to 150% its original size without a loss in tensile strength, and the light, breathable apparel made from it can change cut, style and color according to the whims of its wearer. This kind of garment is popular across FreeMarket, and many wear Arachne Textiles designs as well as its fabrics.

Estrella Cesar, Dedicated Crafting Pixie					
Generation	2n	MRCZ Tier	2	Geneline	2
Experience	2	Interface	–	Tech	1

GRINDSTONE COWBOYS (TIER 6)

Purpose: Representation of offmarket concerns in the areas of energy mining and transportation.

Tags: Cultivation, recycling, breaking

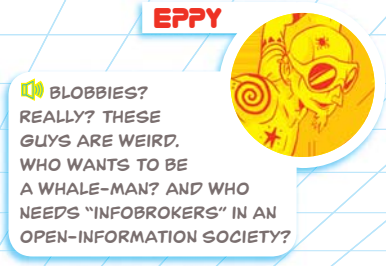
Needs: Special access privileges, labor, drones

Background: Ore mining and processing is big business in the Saturnian economy. Bricks of carbon and titanium from asteroid mines and hydrocarbons from Titan bring in a lot of money to offmarket companies. Space miners are a butch crew of hardcases, roughnecks and interplanetary rig workers that pull out these precious materials and ship them to distant locations. The Cowboys operate drone rigs on Tethys and haul in regolith for FreeMarket's printing needs.

Queenie Eldridge, Roughneck Specialist					
Generation	Im	MRCZ Tier	6	Geneline	1
Experience	1	Interface	1	Tech	1

DANIEL
THE HARPERS LIVE LOW-FLOW, LOW-STATUS LIVES. THEY SHARE MRCZ SPACE WITH VULTERROR. NOT THE BEST ROLE MODELS FOR THESE LOSERS.

TERRY
WE CALL THESE CATS "BLOBBIES" BECAUSE THEY HAVE A GENELINE THAT GIVES THEM AN IMPOSING PHYSICAL STATURE AND A BULK THAT IS UNIMPEDED IN AN AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT.


EPPY
BLOBBIES? REALLY? THESE GUYS ARE WEIRD. WHO WANTS TO BE A WHALE-MAN? AND WHO NEEDS "INFOBROKERS" IN AN OPEN-INFORMATION SOCIETY?

HARPER FAMILY (TIER 1)

Purpose: Small MRCZ formed to look after the interests of the Harper brothers.

Tags: Switching, brothers, criminal

Needs: Negotiation, gifts, friends

Background: The Harper Family MRCZ consists of the three Brothers Harper, all sons of Benjamin Harper, a once-influential immigrant. The three brothers live and work with each other for mutual gain: J Harper is a printer and recycler, soft-spoken and unassuming. Henry4 is a well-adapted hacker with switching, breaking and mobbing being his specialties. The youngest brother Alex is a recent immigrant to the station. Once a wetwork professional on Earth, he ran into trouble and sent word to his brothers, asking them to sponsor his admission to FreeMarket. A born iconoclast and the black sheep of the family, he's here to test the limits of the flow system and ponder the implications of reversible death.

Alex Harper, Troubled Dilettante					
Generation	Im	MRCZ Tier	1	Geneline	1
Experience	1	Interface	–	Tech	–

HENNEMAN/KARTIS INTELLIGENCE GROUP (TIER 6)

Purpose: Provide discreet intelligence gathering and negotiation services to MRCZs throughout FreeMarket.

Tags: Negotiation, discretion, blobbie

Needs: Mobbing, data, security

Background: Henneman/Kartis Intelligence Group (HKIG) is comprised of arbitrators, information brokers and fixers who embrace a semi-aquatic existence. While this group is open to users who do not subscribe to this lifestyle, the highest rated members all submit to these modifications. They are mobbed into massive humanoids inspired by beluga whales. Some of the HKIG are now beyond aquatic existence, preferring to live and work in zero-g pods.

HKIG members typically float in large vats of liquid, insulating themselves from the physical world and rendering them difficult to flood or bleed. As a result, they maintain a degree of confidentiality that is unheard of on FreeMarket. Only on rare occasions do they meet clients in person, preferring remote communication for business transactions. Their support staff, security sweeps and anti-breaking counter-measures ensure a high level of security against hackers, ghosts and wetworkers.

An old, powerful MRCZ, one of HKIG's founding members was an Original.

Nelson Chiodo, Info Geek Luminary					
Generation	Bla	MRCZ Tier	6	Geneline	3
Experience	3	Interface	2	Tech	2

THOR

WE'RE EYEING LEAH AS A POSSIBLE ACQUISITION, BUT SHE IS TRYING TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT AND UNDERGROUND.

RAY

VIGILANTE MRCZS LIKE THE BLACK OPERATORS, DEAD SWITCH, VACANT SIGNAL AND THE TRIGGER-HAPPY BUSYBACK LO-TONES FIND THE MANDARINS OVERLY CAUTIOUS, SOFTHEARTED AND UNNECESSARY.

SUPERUSER

THESE GUYS ARE BIG INTO GRAFFITI. THEY PLASTER THEIR UPTURNED CHAMPAGNE GLASS LOGO IN IMPROBABLE LOCALES AROUND THE STATION.

LEAH'S WONDERFUL WONDERS (TIER 1)

Purpose: To make shiny, pretty, happy things that walk, crawl and fly.

Tags: Ephemera, robotics, antiques

Needs: Printing, independence, sponsorship

Background: Leah Toy is a 2nd gen who learned robotics and engineering from her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Toy were members of a transportation systems MRCZ and leveraged their flow to flood their daughter's developing mind with their combined knowledge. Rather than pursue her parents' ambition, she fell in with a young musician. Together they formed a MRCZ with a printer friend and created a line of antique-looking and baroque automatons. The trio reside in an apartment recycled from old mining crates and located beneath the train terminal.

Leah Toy, Wallflower Specialist Geek					
Generation	2n	MRCZ Tier	1	Geneline	2
Experience	1	Interface	1	Tech	2

MANDARINS (TIER 4)

Purpose: Justice must be tempered with fairness. It is our task to make sure that FreeMarket remains free.

Tags: Social engineering, philosophy, fairness

Needs: Negotiation, data, public support

Background: The Mandarins are a small MRCZ of educated legal scholars and philosophers. They emerged to answer the call to curb the Operators' vigilantism while at the same time aiding in their quest to maintain justice on FreeMarket. The Mandarins are master indexers and researchers of information. They use the Aggregate like a living case-file, reviewing live footage, bled memories and verbal statements to establish legal precedent and resolve disputes.

Judge Hugo Brin, Dedicated Geek Counselor					
Generation	1st	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	1
Experience	2	Interface	1	Tech	2

MISSING FOUNDATION (TIER 3)

Purpose: Break down the social strata that keeps us separated; maintain the balance of power.

Tags: Breaking, anarchy, subversion

Needs: Social engineering, explosives, graffiti

Background: An active anarchist cell, formed by Pete Missing and Vincent Dominion, with the mission to maintain equitable distribution of power on FreeMarket. The Missing Foundation will disrupt the operations of any MRCZ who they think has monopolized or abused a particular aspect of life on FreeMarket. Their methods are destructive, with breaking and hacking being key activities.

Pete Missing, Charismatic Iconoclast					
Generation	2n	MRCZ Tier	3	Geneline	2
Experience	1	Interface	1	Tech	1

JARED

WHEN THE RAINMAKERS ARE WRINGING DOWNPOURS FROM THE CLOUD SYSTEMS, AND YOU HAVE A CASE TO CRACK, A TRENCH COAT AND HAT MAKE FOR GOOD FASHION SENSE.

RADEK

ENSO IS KNOWN TO TRADE DATA ACQUIRED FROM VULNERABLE MRCZS TO HIGHER-TIERED GROUPS LIKE HKIG. LATELY, I'VE NOTICED THAT ENSO HAS MOVED BEYOND MERE DATA. SEEMS THEY ARE RECRUITING FLOOD/BLEEDERS TO HARVEST MEMORIES.

SUPERUSER

THESE ARROGANT 2ND GENNERS MODELLED THEMSELVES AFTER A FICTITIOUS GROUP IN A SEMINAL BOOK BY SAINT GIBSON.

OPERATORS (TIER 4)

Purpose: The Operators' mission is to monitor identity crime on FreeMarket and respond in one of two ways: exonerate the innocent or punish the guilty

Tags: Shaping, investigation, justice

Needs: Breaking, data, informants

Background: A semi-organized ad-hoc of detectives and investigators dedicated to solving identity-theft and other forms of social deviancy. Freemers are vulnerable to switching, and it's up to the Operators to sort out truth from lies and see that the innocent are exonerated and the guilty are punished. Some freemers hold the Operators with some degree of contempt (unless the Operators are working for them, of course), as these bloodhounds see everyone as a potential suspect and are notorious for losing flow due to their aggressive activities and pugnacious demeanors. Operators affect an old Earth parlance and dress sense, both to distinguish themselves from the perps and to form a social bond with other dicks.

They patrol the city sectors at night, cleaving to the low-flow areas, the dangerous places and the emptiest streets, where they can do their work without interference. Operators are fiercely driven to bring justice, despite their fringe and somewhat scary nature.

Ford Deckard, Cynical Maven					
Generation	1st	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	1
Experience	2	Interface	2	Tech	2

ENSO (TIER 5)

Purpose: Experience is the most valuable commodity.

Tags: Flood/bleeding, data, trading

Needs: Negotiation, networking, new memories

Background: The Near-Saturn Orbit Trading Firm is a conglomeration of well-connected immigrants who use their influence both on- and offmarket to siphon data and trade it to various MRCZs on FreeMarket, as well as groups on Earth, Mars and the other orbital colonies.

Jitender, Ground-breaking Early Adopter					
Generation	Im	MRCZ Tier	5	Geneline	1
Experience	2	Interface	1	Tech	1

PANTHER MODERNS (TIER 4)

Purpose: We know what's cool. We know what's hot. You don't know anything until the Moderns do.

Tags: Thin slicing, trends, neophilia

Needs: Negotiation, data, ad space

Background: Seekers of the new and cool, they prowl the phases of FreeMarket looking for new technology, new fashions, new MRCZs and new mobs that catch their fancies. After locating something unique or interesting, they post their findings and spread the news to other MRCZs. Through their cool-hunting work, Panther Moderns are always the first to find the latest,

THOR

THE PANTHER MODERNS AREN'T THIN SLICERS, THEY'RE THIN SLASHERS. THEY'VE TANKED MORE MRCZS THAN SATURN HAS MOONS.

SAIF

I LOVE THE PEC, BUT THEY ARE SERIOUS GEEKS. THEY COULD BE MUCH HIGHER-TIERED, BUT THEY CARE WAY MORE ABOUT STATION TECH THAN THEY DO ABOUT CIVILITY, FRIENDS LISTS OR HYGIENE.

TERRY

I TRADE WITH RED HOOK FOR ALL OF MY FRUIT AND VEGETABLE NEEDS. THEY MAY BE TIER 2, BUT MEGAN HAS CRAZY-HIGH FLOW.

biggest thing and their memes have fostered many pop culture revolutions on FreeMarket. Their taste is discerning, and their picks almost always gain flow boosts, so much so that other MRCZs seek out the too-cool-for-school Moderns and ply them with gifts or favors in order to receive a bump in popularity.

Sandman, Controversial Maven					
Generation	2n	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	2
Experience	2	Interface	2	Tech	2

PEOPLE'S ENERGY CORPORATION (TIER 4)

Purpose: Build upon the success of others and join forces to make FreeMarket safe, efficient and at the bleeding-edge of orbital settlement technology.

Tags: Recycling, infrastructure, brainstorming

Needs: Printing, collaboration, drones

Background: The PEC is a group of infrastructure fetishists who obsessively retool FreeMarket's power grid, ductwork and shielding. The solar mirror's current operating levels of 89.79% efficiency are largely due to the efforts of the PEC. Its members are slavishly focused on hitting 90%. Because of their knowledge of the space station's design, they're the first to be consulted when other MRCZs are planning large expansions or relocations. The PEC has seen it or done it all and knows all about the pitfalls involved when one starts mucking about with FreeMarket Station.

Constantin Edison, Obsessive Networked Geek					
Generation	Bla	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	3
Experience	1	Interface	2	Tech	2

RED HOOK CO-OP (TIER 2)

Purpose: Natural food is good food. Eating it keeps us healthy; growing it keeps us happy.

Tags: Cultivation, food, gifting

Needs: Recycling, plots of land, cooperation

Background: Red Hook Co-Op is an adhocracy dedicated to the production and distribution of food and food-related goods in tightly confined human habitats. This seemingly innocuous MRCZ is surprising in its influence. They earn high flow margins by gifting fresh produce to other MRCZs and by managing organic waste. Members tend to be both down to earth and fashionable at the same time.

Megan MacEntyre, Networked Organizer					
Generation	2n	MRCZ Tier	2	Geneline	2
Experience	3	Interface	3	Tech	–

THOR

I'VE SEEN DATA THAT INDICATES SHELLSHOKK BASED THEIR DESIGNS ON STOLEN PROTOTYPES DEVELOPED DURING CONFLICTS ON MARS. I'VE ALSO SEEN CONTRADICTORY DATA HINTING THAT SHELLSHOKK CONTRACTED EPHEMERISTS TO SEED SAID RUMOR.

DANIEL

SIG7 DOES NOT ADHERE TO AN ADHOCRACY MODEL. IT PLACES AUTHORITY IN THE HANDS OF ONE USER, SJON SE7EN. HE IS A BLANK CREATED FROM THE GENELINE OF AN ORIGINAL. HE RUNS SIG7 AS A RELIGIOUS SECT-CUM-MICRONATION.

SHELLSHOKK BIOPLASTICK ENGINEERING (TIER 4)

Purpose: Maker of exoskeletons for commercial and military applications both on and offmarket.

Tags: Printing, engineering, exoskeletons

Needs: Negotiation, security specialists, offmarket consumers

Background: A military group that emigrated to FreeMarket, this is a small and insular MRCZ loathe to admit new members. They create designs for military-grade exoskeletal frames, ideal for combat but also useful in industries such as construction and mining. This MRCZ boasts a majority population of blanks printed on FreeMarket, immigrant engineers and soldiers sponsored by other members.

Shilo Xoxxus Zielle, Dedicated Fetishist					
Generation	Im	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	1
Experience	2	Interface	–	Tech	3

SIGNAL SEVEN (TIER 7)

Purpose: Signal Seven's purpose is to control the data flow from the relay to the station.

Tags: Printing, mobbing, dubbing

Needs: Flood/bleeding, security, brokers

Background: At Signal Seven (usually written and pronounced as "Sig7"), blanks took over backup printing once the Originals fled. They worked with efficiency and skill, learning to improve upon their geneline designs, and sold their services to others. With their rise in prominence, came a rapid increase in flow, making them one of the most powerful MRCZs on FreeMarket. They now control not only blank production but also perform the majority of FreeMarket's dubbing.

Sjon Se7en, Cybernetic Genetic Elitist					
Generation	Bla	MRCZ Tier	7	Geneline	3
Experience	3	Interface	3	Tech	3

RAY

THOUGH FOUNDED BY ORIGINALS AND FIRST GENERATION FREEMERS, THE SINGULAR MOVEMENT IS INCREASINGLY POPULAR WITH BLANKS.

EPPY

THE PRESENT MEMBERSHIP OF VULTERROR VIEWS WETWORKING WITH LESS INTEREST THAN OUTRAGEOUS MOBS, CARTOONISH WEAPONS AND TERRIFYING DEMEANORS.

RADEK

ZODIAC BLACK IS SO AFRAID OF FLOOD/BLEEDERS AND BREAKERS, HE IS A COMPLETE SHUT-IN REFRAINING FROM ALL DIRECT, HUMAN-TO-HUMAN CONTACT.

SINGULAR MOVEMENT (TIER 4)

Purpose: Death may be reversible but ask yourself, is your soul so easily replaced?

Tags: Ephemera, guidance, religious services

Needs: Social engineering, life-extension technology, gathering spaces

Background: The Singular Movement is one of the larger FreeMarket-spawned religions. Their credo is "one body, one soul, one mind, one life." Their philosophy centers on the concept of original existence. They believe that a person's spirit is most pure at birth, in its original incarnation. With every dub, the spirit becomes dilute, corrupted. Members seek to retain their original bodies their natural lifespans. However, tech and interface are used to keep them alive as long as possible.

Antonella Dnvn, Revered High Priestess					
Generation	1st	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	1
Experience	2	Interface	–	Tech	1

VULTERROR (TIER 1)

Purpose: Will terrorize for food.

Tags: Wetwork, gang, intimidation

Needs: Mobbing, weapons, food

Background: Formerly a MRCZ composed of immigrant criminals and genetically designed terrorists, Vulterror ran amok on FreeMarket for a bloody instant until all but one of its founders were voted off the station and deported. Ntropy 210 altered the purpose of the MRCZ during its Aggregate review at the insistence of its 2nd gen members.

At present time, Vulterror is known more for intimidation than outright violence and is evolving from *Mad Max* mutants to the esoteric fashion and ultraviolence of *Clockwork Orange's* droogs.

Ntropy 210, Cybernetic Mutant Weirdo Specialist					
Generation	Bla	MRCZ Tier	1	Geneline	3
Experience	1	Interface	3	Tech	–

ZODIAC BLACK DREAM FACTORY (TIER 3)

Purpose: Design, manufacture and testing of experimental pharmaceuticals.

Tags: Cultivation, pharmacology, brilliant

Needs: Ghosting, security, dubs

Background: Zodiac Black, the founder and sole member of ZBDF, is a secretive and paranoid producer of pharmaceuticals. He employs a small army of drones to manufacture his products and handle day-to-day distribution. The man behind the MRCZ spends his nights dreaming up new concoctions and his days securing his empire against infiltrators and opportunists.

Zodiac Black, Luminary Biochemical Fetishist					
Generation	1st	MRCZ Tier	3	Geneline	1
Experience	3	Interface	–	Tech	3

MEMORIES

Philosophers, scientists and science-fiction authors have studied memories since the first person on Earth admitted that he forgot something. He knew there was something he was supposed to remember, but forgot what it was. Story of our lives. And long ago, we discovered that true memories can be erased and false memories implanted. Methods were crude originally, but grew more sophisticated over time.

With the advent of dubbing technology, we learned that we could copy memories—back them up. We've even had success at visualizing and projecting them—so your mom can see how she looks through your eyes. Very spooky stuff, that. And after perfecting memory dubbing, we found that we could rapidly transplant memories between users: flooding and bleeding.

This technology has been vital in keeping the station running. Life is dangerous in a metal ring hovering off a gas giant, an extra billion kilometers from the sun. Using the latest advances in dubbing tech, we keep living backups of our memories and experiences. If anything happens to our minds or bodies, we just load our backups.

However, it turns out there are some things you can't do with memories.

THE QUANTUM OF MEMORIES

We discovered through experimentation, observation and accident that memories are unique. We can copy the information of a memory and seed it to a dozen storage devices, but that memory can only be remembered by one person at a time. If I load that memory into six bodies at the same time, only one of them will remember it. The other five carry on as if they never knew. They don't even remember forgetting.

If I steal a memory from you and put it in my head, you forget it, and I remember it. If I run a memory through software that visualizes it, then that recording of the memory ceases to be a memory. It becomes something else—the uniqueness of the experience dissipates, and the visualization becomes the thing. We don't remember the experience; we remember what we watched.

Someone told us once that memories are similar to quantum particles. Once they are looked at in a certain way, they change. We think that's the best way to remember this phenomenon.

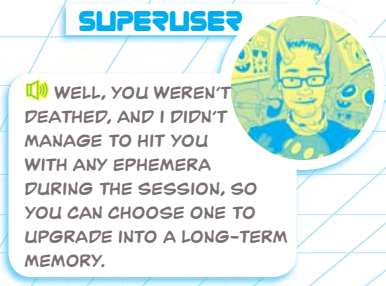
MEMORY CONCEPTS

In order to classify memories, we break each individual memory down into component concepts. There are five concepts: person, place, object, group (MRCZ) and action.

- The *person* concept refers to individuals present in a memory other than that memory's author. Individuals are recognized by either name or specific, identifying details.
- *Place* refers to the location where the memory takes place. Place can be recalled by name or by some significant feature.
- *Object* concepts in memories are animate elements that the memory's author interacts with in the course of the memory.
- When we first started classifying memories, we did not use the group concept. It emerged that we remember groups as singular entities as much as we remember individual identities. *Groups* on the station often refer to MRCZs, but the concept can refer to any group of people, such as an organization or mass movement.
- *Actions* can be undertaken by the memory's author, observed by the author or performed on the author.

A memory always contains at least three of these five elements.

SUPERUSER
YOU STARTED WITH THE SHORT-TERM MEMORY "YESTERDAY I TALKED TO THE HISTORIAN LENIN MERENGUÉ ABOUT THE ORIGINAL GARDEN PARTY MRCZ." WHAT OTHER SHORT-TERM MEMORIES DID YOU TAKE DURING THE SESSION?


SUPERUSER
WELL, YOU WEREN'T DEATHED, AND I DIDN'T MANAGE TO HIT YOU WITH ANY EPHEMERA DURING THE SESSION, SO YOU CAN CHOOSE ONE TO UPGRADE INTO A LONG-TERM MEMORY.

SHORT-TERM MEMORIES

Short-term memories are important for good health. You begin with one short-term memory slot filled with a memory from yesterday.

Remembering Short-term Memories

You can add to your short-term memory list by noting important events that happen to you or that you observe during the session. You have four slots for remembering short-term memories.

Write your short-term memories in your available slots as you go along. You may only log up to four short-term memories per session—unless you are deathed and lose some of your short-term memories.

Ephemera and Short-term Memories

Ephemera infects a user with short-term memories. When you experience a piece of ephemera, you must take the short-term memory it presents and add it to one of your slots. If your slots are full, you must overwrite an existing memory of your choice.

If you have an available slot, but the ephemera presents an incomplete short-term memory—only one or two concepts—you may complete the memory with the appropriate number of concepts of your choice.

If you don't have an available slot, and the ephemera presents an incomplete short-term memory, merge the incomplete ephemera concepts with one of your existing short-term memories, and replace the old memory with this new hybrid.

Upgrading Short-Term Memories

At the end of the session, transfer one of your short-term memories to a long-term memory.

Forgetting Short-Term Memories

You can forget a short-term memory whenever you want. Erase or overwrite it. Some events cause you to forget memories when you might not want to, though.

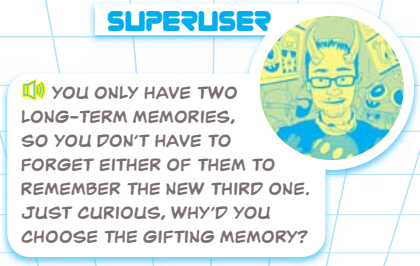
Forget at the End of the Session

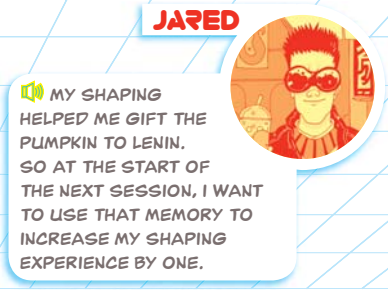
At the end of a session, you must forget any short-term memories you haven't upgraded to long-term.

Death Makes You Forget

If you're deathed, you have to lose short-term memories according to how badly deathed you were: light death causes you to lose two; heavy death causes you to lose three; perfect death causes you to lose all of your short-term memories. In the case of light or heavy death, you can choose which memories are lost if you had more than two or three in your head at the time.

JARED
I AM GOING TO PUT THE "GIFTING" ONE INTO LONG-TERM MEMORY. AND I'LL PROBABLY FORGET THE "GERMINATOR" MEMORY AT THE END OF THE SESSION.


SUPERUSER
YOU ONLY HAVE TWO LONG-TERM MEMORIES, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO FORGET EITHER OF THEM TO REMEMBER THE NEW THIRD ONE. JUST CURIOUS, WHY'D YOU CHOOSE THE GIFTING MEMORY?


JARED
MY SHAPING HELPED ME GIFT THE PUMPKIN TO LENIN. SO AT THE START OF THE NEXT SESSION, I WANT TO USE THAT MEMORY TO INCREASE MY SHAPING EXPERIENCE BY ONE.

LONG-TERM MEMORIES

You can have up to three long-term memories at once. You start with two. They include important stuff about your past.

At the end of a session, you may add a long-term memory by upgrading a short-term memory into a long-term memory slot.

Experiencing Long-term Memories

At the start of a session (except your first), you may experience a long-term memory. Take the long-term memory and apply it to any appropriate experience.

If you already have a rating in that experience, increase the rating by one to a maximum of 3.

If you do not have a rating in the experience, you now have a rating 1.

The long-term memory must apply to the experience. The superuser is the final arbiter of what applies and what doesn't.

Once applied, erase the long-term memory from that slot.

Forgetting Long-Term Memories

At the end of a session, you may erase or forget any or all of your long-term memories.

Flood/Bleeding

Also, you may forget a memory if another user hits you with a flood/bleeding challenge and bleeds out one of your memories or overwrites an existing one.

FLOOD/BLEEDING

Flood/bleeding is our term for hacking a user's brain and implanting (flooding) or removing (bleeding) a memory.

Due to bandwidth issues, flood/bleeding may only be accomplished through the dermal network—touch.

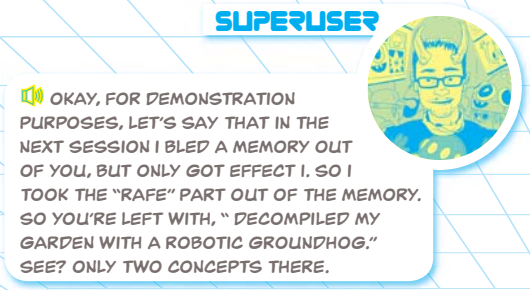
Flooding

Flooding requires the user have either three points of data or a memory of his own that he wishes to implant. In order to flood, you must have the data or be willing to sacrifice one of your own long-term memories. The data is spent or your memory is erased, respectively.

If you flood a whole memory, the memory goes into an available open slot. If there's no open slot, the target user chooses which memory to overwrite and replace.

Partial Flood

If you flood one or two concepts, but not a whole memory, and there's an available long-term slot, the target user can fill in the missing


SUPERUSER
OKAY, FOR DEMONSTRATION PURPOSES, LET'S SAY THAT IN THE NEXT SESSION I BLED A MEMORY OUT OF YOU, BUT ONLY GOT EFFECT I. SO I TOOK THE "RAFE" PART OUT OF THE MEMORY. SO YOU'RE LEFT WITH, " DECOMPILED MY GARDEN WITH A ROBOTIC GROUNDHOG." SEE? ONLY TWO CONCEPTS THERE.
JARED
I FORGOT WHO DECOMPILED MY GARDEN. I GET TO MERGE A CONCEPT FROM A SHORT TERM MEMORY, RIGHT? SO IF I HAD ANOTHER SHORT TERM MEMORY WITH LENIN IN IT, I COULD MAKE IT, "LENIN MERENGUÉ DECOMPILED MY GARDEN WITH A ROBOTIC GROUNDHOG." RIGHT?
SUPERUSER
RIGHT! NOW, IF THIS FLOOD/BLEEDER IS PARTICULARLY DEVIOUS, HE COULD FLOOD THE RAFE CONCEPT BACK INTO AN EXISTING MEMORY (IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY FREE SLOTS).

concepts with concepts from one of his short-term memories. That short-term memory is then erased.

If you partially flood a memory, and there's no open long-term slot, merge the partial memory concepts with one of the existing long-term memories. Your target may decide which.

Bleeding

Bleeding is a controversial but established practice on the station. Using advanced hacking techniques, you can touch another user and, in the blink of an eye, remove one of his memories.

You only cause someone to forget a moment in time. You can't steal someone's ability to play the guitar, but you can steal the night he performed in his first recital and got a standing ovation.

When you bleed a memory, you can lodge it in one of your long-term slots and remember it as your own. If you have an available slot, the memory goes in there. If you do not have an available slot, you may overwrite a memory of your choosing.

Alternately, you can convert a memory and its concepts to data. Each concept is worth one point of data—a whole memory is worth three points of data. If this is done, the data is no longer considered a memory. It's just information. It can only be reconstructed as a memory by flooding the data into another user.

Partial Bleeds

If you only partially bleed a memory, things get complicated.

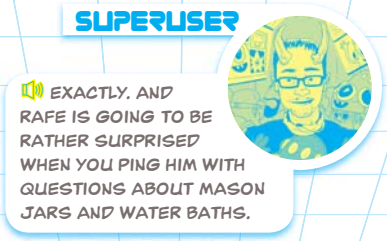
If you partially bleed a memory—meaning you only take one or two concepts—you may lodge the concepts in your own memories or you may convert the concepts to data. If you convert them to data, each concept is worth one point. The data is no longer considered memory. It's information now.

If you lodge partial memory concepts in an open slot, you must complete the memory with concepts from a short-term memory. The short-term memory is erased when it is merged. If you do not have a short-term memory, the superuser decides the additional concepts.

If you do not have an open slot for the partial memory concepts, you must merge the concepts with an existing long-term memory.

The victim of a partial bleed must fill in the missing parts of his memory with concepts from one of his other short-term memories. The victim cannot remember what was stolen, but he does know that he's forgotten something. By carefully using evidence around him, he might be able to reconstruct the content of the memory—that he had a loving mother, for example, based on video of himself and his mother—but he'll never fully remember that moment. He can't remember his mother, though he knows she loves him.

JARED
SO I COULD END UP WITH, "I HELPED RAFE FROM MF CAN PEACHES HARVESTED FROM THE AEROPONIC ORCHARDS." RIGHT? THAT'S WEIRD. WHY IS RAFE WEARING MY MOM'S APRON?


SUPERUSER
EXACTLY. AND RAFE IS GOING TO BE RATHER SURPRISED WHEN YOU PING HIM WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT MASON JARS AND WATER BATHS.

JARED
WELL, I'LL PING HIM. LENIN WANTS MORE PUMPKINS, SO I NEED A LARGER AEROPONIC SUITE. RAFE IS GOING TO GIVE ME ACCESS TO HIS FACILITY – HE'S A CULTIVATOR LIKE ME.

MEMORIES AND DATA

Memories and data are closely linked on the station. Memory concepts can be converted into data, which can be traded or gifted. And data can be reconstructed into memories by flooders.

In order to flood a memory that is not your own, you must have three points of data. One point of data is expended and lost for each memory concept implanted in the challenge.

If you bleed a memory, you may choose to keep it for yourself or you may offload it and convert it into data. Each concept bled out is worth one point of data.

REVERSIBLE DEATH

When they were building the station, the Originals quickly realized that without extensive medical care, they would all rapidly die off. Life in space is toxic to earth-born humans. Exposure to harsh radiation and years in zero- and microgravity taxes the body. Cancer and other debilitating diseases run rampant.

The Aggregate's initial function was to monitor the location, health and well-being of the Originals. As more technology came online, the pioneers installed a cutting-edge, automated health care system in their new home. That technology and automation has only improved across two subsequent generations of freemers. Now, death is a temporary inconvenience on the station.

In its current incarnation, the Aggregate's medical services blanket the station with an extensive drone and sweep network. Your key monitors your health. It signals the station when care is needed. The Aggregate routinely dispatches carebots for minor health issues and preventive maintenance. For serious injury or unexpected death, the Aggregate dispatches medical drones to deliver immediate attention. It's rare for you to be out of commission for more than an hour.

In the event of death due to circumstances like hemorrhage, suffocation or poisoning, the medical drones and bots are equipped with a tech suite that allows them to treat you on site. The standard treatment in such cases is artificially-induced suspension—the effect of which is similar to drowning in freezing water.

JARED
MANY ORIGINALS WERE IN THEIR 50S OR OLDER WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT THE STATION. SENESCENCE AND STERILITY WERE OBSTACLES TO BE OVERCOME IF FREEMARKET WAS EVER GOING TO WORK AS A SELF-SUSTAINING HABITAT.
SUPERUSER
WE MAINTAIN A STRICT POLICY ON IMMIGRATION. A GENETICALLY ENHANCED PERSON WHO LEAVES FREEMARKET AND THEN RETURNS COULD BRING BACK A VIRUS THAT TARGETS RESIDENTS OF THE STATION WHO SHARE A PARTICULAR GENELINE.
JARED
ONE OF THE HUGE CULTURAL SHIFTS FOR IMMIGRANTS IS THAT THERE IS NO GRIEVING PROCESS HERE. THE NATURE OF DEATH IS UP FOR DEBATE, BUT REGARDLESS, WE KNOW YOU'LL BE BACK SOON.

If you're severely injured, you lose memories even if there's no direct trauma to the brain. The sweeps shut you down in order to work on you. If you were kept alive during surgery, your body might shut down, causing major damage as your cells lyse and die.

Partial replacement is also an option to restore life. The damaged pieces are removed and replaced with freshly printed copies. This differs from creating a new body and uploading a dub because the body is still you even if the component parts are not original spec.

In the event of death due to massive bodily damage, or if a body is unrecoverable, the station issues an order to the blank printers to produce a new body. Your backup is retrieved from solid-state storage on Tethys and loaded into the new body. Even after such a heavy death, you're usually back on your feet in your new body in less than a week.

LIGHT DEATH

In the case of a light death, you forget two of your short-term memories. The Aggregate dispatches medical sweeps to come and patch you up. They revive you on the spot, and you're back on your feet within the hour.

HEAVY DEATH

If you are heavily deathed, the Aggregate dispatches medical sweeps to your location and attempts medical care on the spot. Usually, they can take care of you. You're back on your feet in a couple of hours at most. Unfortunately, you forget three of your short-term memories.

PERFECT DEATH

Wetworkers call this last level of death the "perfect death" because it causes you to lose all of your short-term memories. Since wetworkers are often employed to eliminate short-term memories, this type of death represents professional perfection.

In order to attain this level of death, the body must be destroyed, nerves damaged or the brain turned to paste. Our revivification technology is so good, it's the only way to be sure.

The Aggregate will get you back on your feet after your body has been destroyed, but depending on your MRCZ's tier, you might be missing a few things.

Reversible Death by Tier

Unaffiliated

When you're unaffiliated, your reversible deaths are limited. One prime backup is maintained, which includes your base geneline, experiences and long-term memories. It does not include your interface or any modifications you've made to your geneline or experiences.

Tier 1 Backup

Each member of a MRCZ is backed up once upon joining. Users are restored from that backup, rather than their prime backup, but without interface or additional modifications. So if your experiences (or geneline) were modified after you joined your current MRCZ, you lose the changes.

Tier 2 Backup

Your prime backup is updated when your MRCZ achieves tier 2 status. When restoring, this backup is brought online, but without its interface.

Tier 3 Backup

Your prime backup is updated at the start of each session. You are restored from this backup sans any in-session modifications and without interface.

Tier 4 Backup

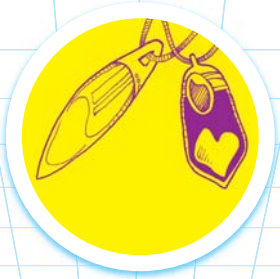
Your prime backup is updated at the start of each session. Should you be perfectly deathed during the session, you are restored from this backup sans any in-session modifications and without interface.

Tier 5 Backup

Your geneline, experience and long-term memories are updated moment to moment. One interface can be restored from your backup.

Tier 6 Backup

Your geneline, experience and long-term memories are updated moment to moment. Two interfaces can be restored from your backup.



Tier 7 Backup

Your geneline, experience, long-term memories, interface and all modifications are updated moment to moment. Prime backup is updated at user request.

You Stole My Interface!

Most backups don't restore interfaces. Why? It's sort of a glitch in the system. When the Originals designed the Aggregate and medical tech, interface was not as prevalent or integrated. They're seen as extraneous or even possibly hazardous.

Instead, the Aggregate strips them out. Your interface isn't backed up and restored until you reach tier 5. Even then, it's only one unit—two at tier 6 and all three at tier 7.

To add insult to a perfect death, the Aggregate regrows your body with a nanny interface installed—a biomonitor.

BIOMONITOR (I): WETWORK, MEDICAL, ALERT. IF YOU'RE DEATHED AGAIN, THE AGGREGATE DISPATCHES DRONES FASTER TO COME AND HELP YOU OUT.

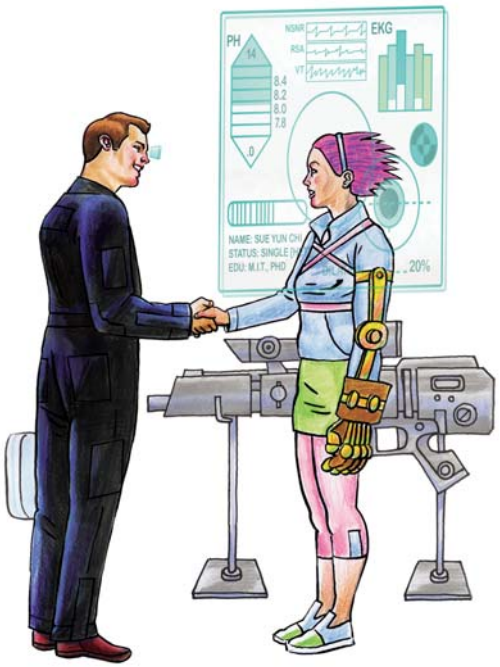
As for your other interfaces, hit up a mobbing MRCZ. Most would be happy to gift you some new mobs. It's part of the culture.

OPTING OUT

For reasons philosophical and religious, some users wish to opt out of the Aggregate's reversible death policies. This is a sticky area of contention between the Originals' goals, the Aggregate's limits and the rights of individual users.

The meaning of death has been hotly debated on the station since its inception. By way of compromise between policy and belief, users may opt out of total replacement and redubbing—having their consciousness transferred to a new body. A user who has opted out is revivified in the case of a light or heavy death, but in the event of a perfect death, is not restored or reloaded.

The Aggregate will never accept a coerced opt out. Many fail-safes and checks are in place to prevent such a thing from happening.

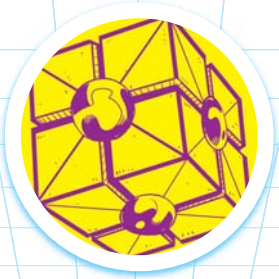


DATA

"FreeMarket" is not our home's real name. Its real name is "Cassini-Huygens Orbital Intrasystem Relay Station." The name says it all, eh? Well, there is a clue in there. The station's role is that of a relay. It's not merely a playground for hypermodern freaks. The station sports a giant laser array that beams back information to other relays in the inner system. And what, pray tell, is it receiving and beaming over such great distances? Backup data. The station is a relay, and Tethys—one of Saturn's more stable moons—has been converted into a giant solid-state information storage device. It's the safest backup in the solar system, and we're its gatekeepers.

Why is that important to us? Think of all of the billions of lives passing through our relay down to Tethys. Makes you giddy, doesn't it?

Technically, according to the original charter for the station, we're the stewards of the relay and the information it transmits. We make sure it all runs smoothly. Of course with all of the automation, the job mostly does itself at this point. But as the guardians of this most precious of resources, we gain access to some of its wealth. High-tier MRCZs get fed data directly from the relay. You know, to check it, monitor it. We certainly don't gawk at it, gossip about it and trade it around like baseball cards. Certainly not.



That data is a commodity. The data we get can be a genetic sequence, a lifetime of memories or the 1953 season of *I Love Lucy*. But there's such a torrent of data, it's impossible to pull something specific out of the stream.

This unknown quality of data makes it valuable on one hand and prosaic on the other. Data is a currency of trade if either the data is known to contain information of value or if the content of the data is unknown.

DATA POINTS

In order to keep things simple, we distribute data in points. One point of data, two points, etc. Data, unlike experience, geneline, tech and interface has no rating limit. You can have 1 data or you can have 10 data.

DATA SOURCES

Data can be acquired through your MRCZ, by hacking it out of technology, in trade, as a gift or by bleeding another user.

MRCZ Data

Tier 3 Data

Each founder of a MRCZ receives one point of data when that MRCZ achieves tier 3.

Tier 4 Data

Each founder receives two points of data when the MRCZ achieves tier 4.

Tier 5 Data

Each member of the MRCZ receives one point of data upon attaining tier 5.

Tier 6 Data

Each member of the MRCZ receives two points of data upon reaching tier 6.

Tier 7 Data

Each member of the MRCZ receives one point of data per session.

Hacking Out Data

You may use breaking to extract data from a piece of tech—you can hack out source code or tease forth hidden information stored within.

Bleeding Data

Each memory concept bled from a user can be converted to one point of data. If so converted, you don't lodge the memory in a long-term memory slot. Simply note the amount of data in your data count.

THIN SLICING DATA

It is possible to thin slice data. You crack it open and take a brief peek inside; you fast forward, sample and spot check.

According to the effects of a thin slicing challenge, you can increase the value of data; while you're poking around, you find a delicious nugget, something of worth to the station. This increases the rating of the data. So if it was data 1, now it's data 2. If it was data 2, now it's data 3.

Conversely, in a botched thin slicing challenge, you crack open that data and find nothing of interest. Its rating decreases. If it was data 1, now it's nothing; it's worthless. If it was data 2, now it's data 1, etc.

DATA IN GIFTS AND TRADE

You may gift data. You may negotiate with or trade for data.

DESTROYING DATA

If you break a piece of tech or an interface that contains data, any data it contains is destroyed.

GENELINE

Everyone has one. Some people's are unique. Some people share parts and some folks even have the exact same one as everyone else in their line. The geneline is a fundamental part of life on FreeMarket.

GENELINE NAMES

Geneline names can be a model number, a family name, a reference to a historical progenitor or a clever play on words.

MI2001, HARPER, NAPOLEON V3.26, OR APPLESEEDER.

You decide your geneline name when you create your user profile.

GENELINE TAGS

Geneline tags describe physical or mental traits associated with your heritage or body. It's best if they are descriptive and active.

MASSIVE, WALL-CRAWLING OR TENACIOUS (AS OPPOSED TO FUN, LOSER OR LONER).

You decide your geneline tags when you make your profile.

GENELINE RATING

Geneline, like everything else on the station, is rated from 1 to 3. Your rating doesn't determine quality. It's more of an indicator of staying power. The higher your rating, the longer you can stay in the fight.

GENELINE BURN OUT

You may burn out your geneline using the burn action. Reduce your geneline's rating according to the rules for the burn action.

If you burn your geneline to zero, you slip into brain death. The Aggregate gets stuck. It will not restore you. You remain in this state until you are perfectly deathed by a merciful wetworker. Only then are you restored from your backup.

SAMPLE GENELINES

Below is a list of sample genelines you can pick from when you create your profile. Apply your generation's rating to the geneline. You may modify the name and tags as you see fit.

Amahoro-Abana		
Willowy	Exotic	Aristocratic
Blobbie		
Enduring	Aquatic	Huge
Burke		
Investigator	Crime	Vigilant
Burritz		
Aggressive	Rugged	Polite
Cawshis		
Prescient	Smooth-Talking	Quick
DaVinci		
Inventive	Artistic	Old World
Disco		
Flashy	Magnetic	Pharmacology
Eastwood		
Stern	Marksman	Musician
Gator		
Brutish	Imposing	Smiley
Gautama		
Meditative	Wise	Compassionate
Giullete		
Political	Clever	Patient
Giza		
Brilliant	Small Footprint	Religious
Gomi Hanne		
Social	Technical	Ingratiating
Gondorf		
Insightful	Inconspicuous	Nocturnal
Graff-Orlok		
Commanding	Feral	Intimidating
Hark		
Compassionate	Biofeedback	Graceful

Harper		
Arbitration	Precision	Tenacious
Kalysa-Angkor		
Discriminating	Disheveled	Paranoid
Kat		
Sure-footed	Aloof	Night Sight
Kent		
Honest	Friendly	Hardworking
Kusanagi		
Cutting	Acrobatic	Sexy
Lazlo		
Obsessive	Brilliant	Physicist
Lebowski		
Peaceful	Lazy	Bowler
Maverick		
Rebellious	Moody	Ingenious
Megis		
Haunting	Serene	Delicious

Mera		
Streamlined	Aquatic	Fast
Miyamoto		
Games	Interactive	Curious
Moreault		
Quick-Healer	Hardy	Passionate
New Artegro		
Double-Jointed	Zero-g Monkey	Radiation Resistant
Phantom		
Code Breaker	Calm	Inscrutable
Pit Bull		
Tenacious	Blunt	Stubborn
Shaper		
Renowned	Creative	Driven
Shark		
Dealer	Scary	Charismatic
Sprite		
Diminutive	Handy	Perceptive

Spyder		
Agile	Illustrator	Cheerful
Takamato		
Manual Dexterity	Sharp-Eyed	Detached
Tor-Skaald		
Handsome	Strong	Honor-Bound
Twenning		
Hypersensitive	Stylish	Light Sleeper
Wright		
Intelligent	Fascinated	Humane
Wiseau		
Translucent	Self-Important	Oblivious
X21-Omega		
Merciless	Agoraphobic	Silent
Yorick		
Dramatic	Gaunt	Humorous
Züster		
Protective	Athletic	Handsome

INTERFACE

Interface is our term for cybernetic enhancements, be it hardware, software or a combination of the two. In most cases, these implants interface with our keys via our nervous systems.

Interfaces are also called "mobs." That's short for modification of body. Interfaces are installed by mobbers.

INTERFACE SLOTS

You can have up to three interfaces installed. Each interface has a name, a rating and three tags.

INTERFACE NAMES

The best interface names cleverly and succinctly describe what the device does, but an interface name can be a manufacturer, a model number or even the designer's name.

DEFRIENDSTER, CYBERDYNE SYSTEMS ARMS, M201 V5.6 OR SJON 0045.

INTERFACE TAGS

One interface tag must describe an experience to which it is tied. All interfaces are tagged to one of the 14 experiences.

The other two interface tags describe briefly what the device does or how it's used.

INTERFACE RATINGS

Interface, like everything else on the station, is rated from 1 to 3. A device's rating doesn't describe its quality. It indicates how much punishment the device can take. A higher-rated device can survive more hazards, glitches and burnout than a lower-rated one.

Starting vs Current Rating

Interface ratings are tracked in two states: starting and current rating.

Starting rating is the rating of the interface at the start of the session. Usually, this corresponds to the rating you assigned to your interface during generation. But your starting interface rating can be increased by a mobber or decreased due to burnout or wetwork during a session.

If your interface rating is modified by a mobber, increase the starting rating.

Current rating tracks how many times in this session you've burned your interface in challenges for which it is tagged. When you burn your interface in a tagged challenge, reduce the starting rating by one and note that in the current rating bubble. If your current rating is reduced to zero, it refreshes at the very end of the session.

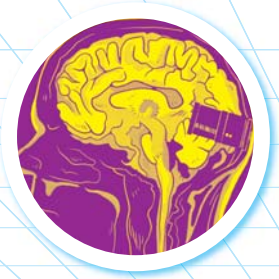
If you burn your interface in a challenge for which it is not tagged, reduce your starting rating. If your interface rating is reduced to zero in this manner, you can no longer use that interface.

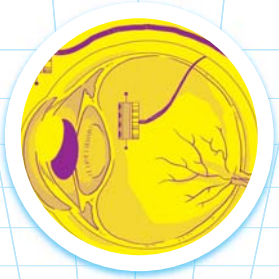
If your starting rating is reduced to zero, your interface is burned out, but it may be restored by mobbing or recycling.

BURNED-OUT INTERFACE

If your starting rating for your interface is reduced to zero due to burnout or wetwork, your interface is inoperable. It cannot be used for burn out, recalibration, error correction or anything else. It's junk occupying a slot.

If you wish to gain access to that interface again, you must see a mobber. He may gift you his services and replace or rebuild the piece through a mobbing challenge. Or he may enter into a contract with you before he'll perform his service.





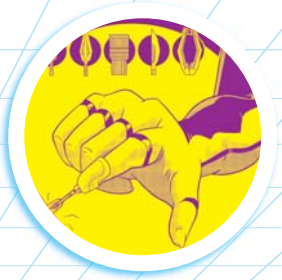
SAMPLE INTERFACE

Below is a list of sample interfaces you can pick from during the creation process. Divide your interface generation points between them as you like. You may have up to three interfaces. You may modify the name and tags as you see fit.

Aggrettack V. 278 Keysoft		
Switching	Aggregate Hacking	Viral
A keysoft designed to help in switching identities		
Annelid Keysoft		
Cultivation	Extra Appendage	Secretion
Allows the user to evaluate the health and growth rate of cultivated soil, and secrete chemicals to prevent biological failure and promote grow		
Bugzap Keysoft		
Printing	Data Checker	Error Correction
Error-tracking keysoft reveals possible design flaws in printing schematics		

Clockwork Keysoft		
Social Engineering	Personal Communication	Predictive
A keysoft that helps predict the reactions of target users		
CultureSoft History Base		
Negotiation	Brain Chip	Hypnotic
This chip searches a database of human culture and history, then compiles a mesmerizing collage of images that strengthen your argument		
Defender Keysoft		
Breaking	Firewall	Hidden
A keysoft that protects the user from breaking attempts by keeping their pings hidden from known breakers		
Delicatessen Keysoft		
Thin Slicing	Trend Tracker	Popular
Tracks and charts flow-generating artists and art movements		
DoubleAgent Keysoft		
Ghosting	Sensor Detector	Passive
Augmented reality keysoft that allows ghosts to see "blips" overlaying the position of sweeps, cameras and users with ghosting interface.		

Echo Doppler Optic		
Mobbing	Ultrasonic	Optical
The echo doppler optic allows mobbers to see incidence of deep vein thrombosis resulting from surgical procedures.		
Expression Catalogue Keysoft		
Shaping	Optical Analysis	Emotional
An expert system catalogue of human expression		
Fugue Keysoft		
Flood/Bleeding	Long-Term Memory	Active Countermeasures
Suppresses conscious recall of memories		
Gauntlet Implant		
Breaking	Metal Implants	Fusion Powered
Powered dermal inlays with a much greater variable grip strength than biological hands.		
Headsuite Editor Keysoft		
Ephemera	Feed Editor	Rapid Upload
Keysoft that facilitates realtime feed composition and transmission		



Kissingerface Keysoft		
Negotiation	Virtual Statesman	Diplomatic
An expert system that appears as a venerable statesman in the user's key. The statesman provides real-time advice during negotiations.		
Lucky Star Cannon Implant		
Wetwork	Gyrojet Cannon	Concealed
A one-shot, gyrojet cannon concealed in the user's arm		
Mumbling Crickets Implant		
Ghosting	Signals Jammer	Unobtrusive Security
An implanted ECM jamming suite to counter sensors		
Nervous Ink Implant		
Mobbing	Dermal Chromatovores	Schematics
When touching another user, nervous ink reads a target's mobs and displays schematics on the mobber's skin		
Rainstorm Keysoft		
Social Engineering	Flashmobbing	Tracking
Social keysoft that tracks formation and dispersal of crowds		

Reflexorz Implant		
Wetwork	Reflexes	Like Lightning
Enhanced reflexes necessary for every wetworker working in a cybernetic environment		
RhymeConnect Keysoft		
Ephemera	Rhyming Dictionary	Freestyle
A keysoft to enhance performance in your freestyle battles		
Setae Implants		
Ghosting	Microfiber	Adhesive
Microfiber implants enable the user to climb sheer surfaces		
SoapThroat Implant		
Ephemera	Voicebox	Modulation
An interface package that grants fine control of vocal range, volume and pitch		
Spinewires Implant		
Cultivation	Fine Motor Skills	Repetitive
Fine motor coordination can be tweaked for specific, repetitive tasks		

Stanislav Keysoft		
Shaping	Method Acting	Truthiness
This keysoft is designed for actors and poets to deliver an even more genuine performance		
Swiss Army Hand		
Recycling	Toolkit	Modular
This is a very popular interface with recyclers. One of the user's hands is modified and combined with a custom retractable micro- and nano-toolset.		
Thumb Scythes Implant		
Wetwork	Curved Blades	Razor Sharp
Implanted blades that can be used to wound or torture		
Voight-Kampff Ideomotor Detector		
Shaping	Empathy Test	Biometric
This interface tracks capillary dilation of the so-called blush response, fluctuation of the pupil and involuntary dilation of the iris. We call it Voight-Kampff for short.		

TECHNOLOGY

The station is brimming with gadgets, devices, gewgaws, robots, drones and nanologicals. We consider technology to be anything material and external to a person that serves an active function in station life. It's a broad definition.

Cookies, millimeter-wave radar goggles and dust bunnies are all considered technology. Walls and your pajamas aren't considered tech. They can be, but usually they're not. It's hard to explain.

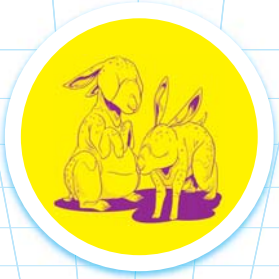
TECHNOLOGY NAMES

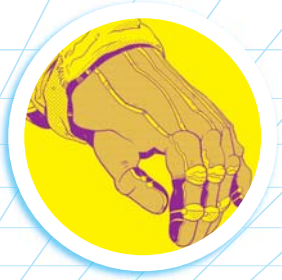
Tech names are varied. They can be functional or florid, descriptive or plain.

GUN; WYKYDTRON; VERY FAST, VERY BLACK AERODYNE; OR MARTIAN CAMOUFLAGE.

TECHNOLOGY TAGS

Technology, like geneline and interface, has three tags. Each piece of tech must have an experience as one of its tags. It only can be used for the engage tech action in challenges of that type. The other two tags tell us what the device does and what it looks like.





TECHNOLOGY RATING

Like everything on the station, technology is rated from 1 to 3. The rating doesn't denote quality, per se. It is an indicator of the item's usefulness and staying power. The higher the rating, the more advantageous and durable a piece of technology is.

In a challenge for which it is tagged, technology may be used for the engage tech action a number of times equal to its rating.

Technology may be used for the burn action in any challenge. The tech does not have to be tagged for the challenge in order to be burned.

TECHNOLOGY SLOTS

You may have up to five pieces of technology at any one time. This may not seem like a lot, but you'll have to trust us when we tell you, it's more than enough.

BURNED-OUT TECHNOLOGY

If you burn out a piece of technology so that its rating drops to 0, it may no longer be used for engage or burn actions. It may not be gifted. It may, however, be recycled, so it's worth keeping around if you know a recycler. Otherwise toss it.

CONSUMABLE TECHNOLOGY

Certain technology is consumable. There's only a finite amount in a batch—pie, paper, potions, etc. Consumable technology, whether printed or cultivated, degrades one level after each challenge in which it is used.

IF I PRINT A NARCOTIC PUMPKIN PIE RATED AT 1, I CAN ONLY USE IT IN ONE CHALLENGE. AFTER THE CHALLENGE, ITS RATING DROPS TO ZERO. IT'S BEEN EATEN!

CULTIVATED TECHNOLOGY

Cultivated technology is often made of dumb materials. It does not have embedded locator beacons or self-diagnostic chains or any of the other features of smart materials.

This means the tech can't be tracked on your key or by the Aggregate unless it's specifically tagged to be locatable. It flies beneath the radar. Of course, since it can't be remotely tracked or activated, you must be in physical possession of the tech in order to use it. You cannot remotely engage it or burn it out as you can with printed, smart technology.

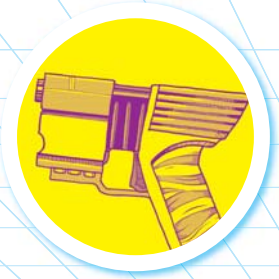
SAMPLE TECHNOLOGY

Below is a list of sample technology you can pick from during the creation process. Divide your tech generation points between them as you like. You may have up to five pieces of tech. You may modify the names and tags as you see fit.

Adaptive Perfume		
Flood/Bleeding	Chemical Scent	Adaptive
Smart perfume that utilizes scent to trigger and engineer memories. It adapts to the individual's brain chemistry for enhanced effect		
Arachne Textiles Loom		
Printing	Goatsilk Fabric	Resilient
A custom-built loom that spins and weaves synthetic spider silk		
Band Flyer		
Ephemera	Glossy Poster	Graphic
Publicly posted paper advertising for musical acts		

Biotargeting Patch		
Mobbing	Dermal Patch	Regenerative
A dermal patch that releases medical nanites into the bloodstream during mobbing processes		
Black Pajamas		
Ghosting	Traditional	Ninjesque
A back-to-basics black outfit for use in low-light operations, sneaking around and parties		
Box of Chocolates		
Negotiation	Assorted Chocolates	Addictive
A heart-shaped box of hand-dipped chocolates		
Brachiator		
Ghosting	Backpack Arms	Brachiation
A backpack with mechanical arms, allowing users to swing from coolant tubes and support struts like a monkey		
Chemzyme Analyzer		
Cultivation	Chemical Compounds	Pen-Sized
A pen-sized tool used to sample and analyze chemical compounds		

Dust Bunny		
Recycling	Biobunnymorph	Detritivorous
Rabbit-like waste recycler, blind and hot to the touch		
Epoxy Resin		
Recycling	Adhesive Polymer	Superstrong
A polymer glue used to bond metals and plastics		
Farburst Smart Rifle		
Wetwork	Smart Munitions	Long Range
A polymer sniper rifle with programmable ammunition		
Glider Pack		
Ghosting	Backpack	Gliding
A backpack containing a pair of retractable glider wings		
Goo Gun		
Wetwork	Gun	Regenerative Ammo
A gun that prints its own ammo out of gray goo. Only nostalgic Martian refugees, paranoids and MRCZ-less loners use goo guns.		
Harvest Spider		
Cultivation	Multilegged Drone	Pruner and Picker
A robotic walker that monitors and cultivates crops		



Key Scanner		
Switching	Wristband	Key ID Tracking
A scanner used to log key IDs		
Munsell Paints		
Ephemera	Pigment	Versatile
Pigments that alter their molecular structure in response to the direction of gravity, the source and frequency of ambient light, and even the color of the surface they're placed on		
Nerve Stapler		
Mobbing	Anesthesia	Powerful
Suitable for anesthesia, nervous system upgrades, or lobotomies		
Plasma Cutter		
Recycling	Handheld Torch	Dangerously Powerful
A torch device used to cut apart sheets of metal		
Prowler		
Wetwork	Drone	Poisonous
An insidious drone that hunts down users of a predetermined geneline		

Ray Bike		
Ghosting	Bicycle	Efficient
This bike gets you where you're going with no fuss		
Roachbots		
Ghosting	Swarmbots	Insectile
Insect-like robot spies with cameras and microphones		
Scrambler		
Switching	Proxy Router	Masking
A black box used to mask the identity of a switcher		
Skorpio Exoskeleton		
Wetwork	Polycarbonate	Myoskeletal
A lightweight exoframe that increases the user's strength		
Sledgehammer		
Breaking	Redev Tool	Clumsy
A two-handed hammer used to demolish foamcrete		
Threat Matrix		
Social Engineering	Scanning Goggles	Multimetric
Heads-up goggles that scan a user's biometrics, posture and profile to determine his threat level		

Wykydtron		
Breaking	Supercomputer	Mass-Destructive
A sentient supercomputer designed to go online in the year 4055 and destroy all humankind		
X Factory		
Thin Slicing	Sweep Scanner	Analytical
A sweep that scans and records patterns and trends		
Yul's Scanner		
Shaping	Hover Cam	Predictive Algorithmic
A small hover cam that scans a target's kinesics and feeds predictive responses back to the user		
Zoner		
Flood/Bleeding	Glove	Soothing
An elegant glove that enhances the flood/bleeder's dermal connectivity		

SUPERUSER

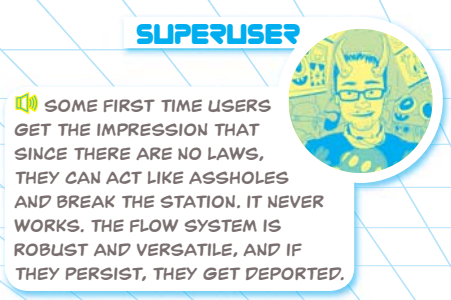
In this chapter, we discuss: the definition of a superuser; the underlying philosophy of life on the station; how to make trouble for the users; how to run your first session; how to run continuing sessions; how to begin and end sessions; how to run a challenge; and the people of FreeMarket.

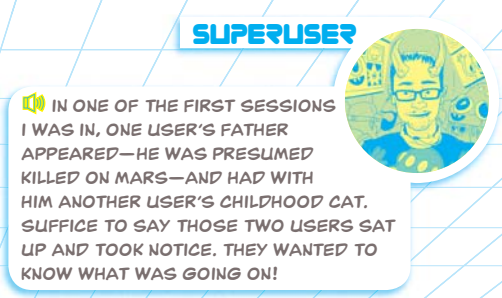
This chapter is specifically addressed to the superuser. Users are welcome to read it, but they don't have to.

WHAT IS A SUPERUSER?

The superuser is special. As the superuser, you have a unique role, separate from the other users.

There is only one superuser per session. You are not a user. You operate one step removed from the users. They are themselves, while you are the obstacles, friends, allies and problems that confront them. You are the Aggregate, the villains, the troublemakers, the innocent allies, the unwitting dupes, the angry mobs and the cheering crowds. You are all of the exciting moments that challenge the users. It's hugely fun to be a superuser on FreeMarket.


SUPERUSER
SOME FIRST TIME USERS GET THE IMPRESSION THAT SINCE THERE ARE NO LAWS, THEY CAN ACT LIKE ASSHOLES AND BREAK THE STATION. IT NEVER WORKS. THE FLOW SYSTEM IS ROBUST AND VERSATILE, AND IF THEY PERSIST, THEY GET DEPORTED.


SUPERUSER
IN ONE OF THE FIRST SESSIONS I WAS IN, ONE USER'S FATHER APPEARED—HE WAS PRESUMED KILLED ON MARS—AND HAD WITH HIM ANOTHER USER'S CHILDHOOD CAT. SUFFICE TO SAY THOSE TWO USERS SAT UP AND TOOK NOTICE. THEY WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON!

Your main job is to take the memories and experiences of the users and twist them to present interesting situations. You create compelling scenes, plop them into the users' collective lap and ask the fateful question, "Now what do you do?"

A user often has his own ideas about FreeMarket's version of freedom and his own immortality. Challenge those assumptions!

THREE TRUTHS ABOUT LIFE ON THE DONUT

There are three underlying currents flowing through FreeMarket culture that foster the sense that anything can happen: *Nothing is as it seems*, *circular logic* and *personal transformation*. These currents give the station a particular and peculiar character.

Nothing Is as It Seems

On FreeMarket, nothing is as it seems. It's a cliché, but take it as heartfelt advice from one offmarket prairie dog to another. Or take it as a stern warning. Everyone wears many masks. Organizations hide their intentions behind elaborate façades. The Aggregate is not a tyrannical overlord. And life is good, but there are problems.

Freemer personalities are dynamic. Wetworkers aren't all quiet, hard, killing machines. Many are pleasant, polite and well-spoken. On the other hand, that cultivation MRCZ next door might be the most competitive, cutthroat band of pirates since the Golden Age.

Circular Logic

Nothing ever dies on FreeMarket. People from the past mysteriously reappear. Fetishistic MRCZs keep moribund ideas alive in strange corners of the station. Forgotten memories reemerge in the minds of unlikely vessels. The past, real or imagined, comes back to haunt the users.

It's vital that when the past does come back, it's recognizable but also noticeably changed. If the past comes back as itself, it risks being boring. If it comes back as a new incarnation, it remains fresh and interesting.

Personal Transformation

The past rolls into the present like waves striking the beach. No one remains the same. All denizens of FreeMarket have license to transform themselves. Memories are lost, stolen or sold. Experiences are burned out and new ones learned. New interfaces are installed, and new technology developed. Someone you knew a few months ago might be utterly reinvented when you meet him again.

SUPERUSER

WE SUPERUSERS DO NOT DICTATE THE ACTIONS OR REACTIONS OF A USER. RATHER, WE USE OUR SPECIAL ROLE TO INSTIGATE CHALLENGES WITH THE USERS. IF WE WIN, ONLY THEN CAN WE FORCE THE USER IN A DIRECTION OF OUR CHOOSING. AND EVEN THEN, IT'S ONLY A MOMENTARY SHOVE.

SUPERUSER

LIFE ON FREEMARKET IS A BEAUTIFUL, DELICATE MACHINE, MUCH LIKE THE STATION ITSELF. A USER NEEDS FLOW, AND WHEN USERS TRY TO ACQUIRE FLOW, THEY MAKE THE MACHINE GO. YOU ENGAGE IN CHALLENGES TO CREATE OR CHANGE SOMETHING. THOSE CHALLENGES LEAD TO NEW CHALLENGES!

MAKING TROUBLE

This section explains the superuser's role as a troublemaker. It offers instruction on how to use the users' profiles as inspiration. A session of FreeMarket play begins with the superuser presenting a problem, or the users diving into a problem themselves.

FOR EXAMPLE, A MEME IS SPREADING THAT DENOUNCES THE USERS' MRCZ. WHO STARTED IT? HOW DO YOU COUNTER IT? MEANWHILE, HOW DO YOU STOP FROM BEING FROWNIED?

What's Happening?

The superuser tells the users what's happening right now on the station, in their phase, next door or even within their own MRCZ. There is a problem or unexpected event that the users must confront. That problem isn't vague or nebulous. In fact, that problem contains details of the users' memories.

FOR EXAMPLE: "YOU'VE JUST ARRIVED ON FREEMARKET" ISN'T A PROBLEM. THERE'S NOTHING TO ACT ON.

"YOU'VE JUST ARRIVED ON FREEMARKET, AND SOMEONE STOLE YOUR MEMORIES" IS WEAK BECAUSE IT DOESN'T HAVE ANY NAMES ATTACHED. IT'S TOO VAGUE.

"YOU'VE JUST ARRIVED ON FREEMARKET, AND THERE'S A MAN STANDING IN FRONT OF YOU WHO LOOKS REMARKABLY LIKE YOUR FATHER, ONLY YOU CAN'T REMEMBER YOUR FATHER. HE SMILES AT YOU AND SAYS, 'SON, I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER MAKE IT. I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET YOUR MOTHER.'"

That's gold. It's got people (your father and mother), action (arrival, apparent memory theft), and a question (who the hell is this guy?).

A fundamental element of problems is that they are short and sweet. They change, grow, flower and die. The superuser and users then engage in challenges to resolve or change the situation.

And as the superuser, you also give that man ratings for geneline, experience, tech and interface. Example ratings are listed later in this section.

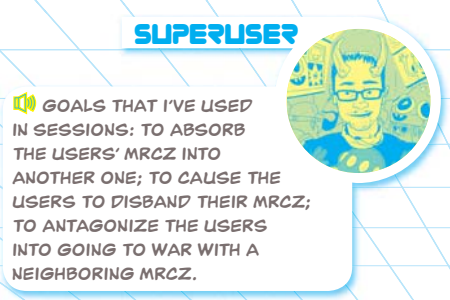
Superuser Session Goals

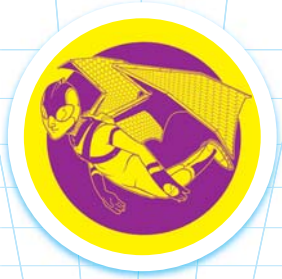
FreeMarket runs best if the superuser has a goal for the session in mind. The goal must be simple and direct: theft of some technology, the return of an important person, revenge for a previous action, etc.

Take a minute and think of something you want to happen in this session. If you're stuck, think about how people on the station are motivated by the need for flow.

Flow Motivations

People on FreeMarket are not motivated by money or limited by the fear of mortality. It makes life different. They still experience


SUPERUSER
GOALS THAT I'VE USED IN SESSIONS: TO ABSORB THE USERS' MRCZ INTO ANOTHER ONE; TO CAUSE THE USERS TO DISBAND THEIR MRCZ; TO ANTAGONIZE THE USERS INTO GOING TO WAR WITH A NEIGHBORING MRCZ.



SUPERUSER
NO ONE EXPECTS YOU TO LIKE EVERYONE ON THE STATION. BUT IF YOU DISPLAY TOO MUCH MISANTHROPY, WE TEND TO TURN AGAINST YOU EN MASSE AND FROWNIE YOU A LOT. SO A LOT OF FREEMERS HIDE THEIR INTENTIONS UNTIL A THIN SLICER DISCOVERS THEM AND MAKES THEM COOL.

greed, jealousy and envy, but fame, exultation and power are earned in a different way than most of us would recognize.

Flow is the most direct path to power and fame. But the flow system rewards gift-giving, cooperation and equitable trade above all else. Therefore, most people on FreeMarket cheerfully give what they have when they can and always seek to negotiate.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU ENTER A SMALL BAKERY AND SEE A CAKE YOU LIKE. THE BAKER IS INCLINED TO GIVE IT TO YOU WITHOUT QUESTION AND EVEN WITHOUT YOUR ASKING. IT WILL BENEFIT HIS FLOW.

The same applies to Sig7, a mobbing MRCZ. They are powerful and exclusive, but if you go to them in need of new mobs, they'll more than likely sit you down and do the modifications for you. Why? Because it earns them flow.

Negotiation, contracts and trade are even more popular than gifting because these interactions grant flow boosts over and above the potential benefits of the contract itself.

The Trouble With User Profiles

The superuser makes trouble for the users. He keeps their lives interesting by presenting new challenges. But what are those challenges? How do you make them interesting? This section offers advice on how to take inspiration from the users' profiles and make good trouble.

Trouble From Memories

When a user has a memory that includes names, places and technology, he's interested in those elements. All you have to do is cherry-pick the concepts from the memories, mash 'em up, and offer them back to the users.

IT'S NOT ENOUGH FOR A USER'S FATHER TO REAPPEAR. HE'S GOT TO BE WEARING THE COLOGNE FROM ANOTHER USER'S MEMORY AND BE CARRYING A GYROJET THAT A THIRD USER REMEMBERS FROM HIS YOUTH.

Trouble with Experiences

Experiences are another clue about what a user is interested in doing on the station. If a user has recycling experience, he wants to fiddle with technology. If he has printing experience, he wants to create stuff. If he has social engineering experience, he wants the opportunity to manipulate people. Use the problems you've created to give him that opportunity.

A BREAKER THINKS QUICKLY AND HACKS A WETWORKER'S GUN TECH BEFORE HE CAN USE IT. A CULTIVATOR MAKES HANDMADE PAPER DOLLS OF BACTERIA AND TRIES TO GIFT THEM. AN EPHEMERIST NEEDS SPACE FROM A TIER 6 MRCZ SO SHE MAY PERFORM. WITH A HANDSHAKE, A FLOOD/BLEEDER STEALS A MEMORY. A GHOST SNEAKS INTO THE HOLE TO TALK WITH A USER WHO IS

I HEARD OF A MRCZ WHOSE PRINTING GOT OUT OF CONTROL. THEY WANTED TO PRINT A HARMLESS PET AND THIN SLICE IT SO THE STATION AS A WHOLE WOULD ADOPT IT. INSTEAD, AN ERROR CREPT INTO THEIR SCHEMATIC AND THEY CREATED A PLAGUE OF VAMPIRE GERBILS.

SHORT-TERM MEMORIES SEEM INCONSEQUENTIAL, BUT DON'T BE MISTAKEN: THEY ARE POWERFUL. SHORT-TERM MEMORIES BECOME LONG-TERM MEMORIES AND LONG-TERM MEMORIES CAN BE STOLEN OR UPGRADED INTO EXPERIENCE. SO IF YOU CONTROL SHORT-TERM MEMORIES, YOU CONTROL THE USER.

ABOUT TO BE DEPORTED. A MOBBER MAKES CUSTOM SKIN MOBS TO HELP HIS MRCZ-MATES GET INTO AN EXCLUSIVE PARTY. A NEGOTIATOR IS CALLED ON TO MEDIATE A DISPUTE BETWEEN HIS FAMILY AND A MRCZ OF BLANKS WHO'VE BEEN CREATED FROM HIS GENELINE. A PRINTER CREATES A PET TO GIVE TO A HIGH-FLOW PRINCESS BUT FALLS IN LOVE WITH THE TOY AND CANNOT PART WITH IT. A RECYCLER MERGES A BROKEN ROBODOG WITH A GREEN GOBLIN GO-KART AND ACCIDENTLY CREATES A MONSTER. A SHAPER PROWLS THE STATION, TRICKING USERS INTO ACCEPTING HIS FRIEND REQUESTS. A SOCIAL ENGINEER GETS WHAT HE WANTS, BUT DOESN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS. A THIN SLICER'S RECENT TRENDSPOTTING EXPLODES OUT OF CONTROL AS THE STATION ADOPTS HIS MEME AND MUTATES IT. A WETWORKER IS CORDIAL AND POLITE, ASKING HIS TARGETS TO WILLINGLY ACQUIESCE SO THAT HE DOESN'T GET A FROWNIE FOR DOING HIS JOB.

If your users' MRCZ focuses on social engineering, then *challenge* them with other social engineers. If the MRCZ focuses on wetwork, then oppose them with a wetworker or two. Don't make all opposition a mirror image, but challenging targets must have an experience or geneline in common with the users.

Trouble in Your Geneline

Geneline is another great way to engage and challenge your users. Members of the same biological family share similar tags. Usually, they share two common tags and each have one tag that's unique to the individual. Blanks might have brothers and sisters who have exactly the same tags.

Bring in people with related genelines. Users love it! It really makes the station feel like a living and breathing place.

Steal your users' tags without remorse. Alter them without compunction. You'll create interesting and unique characters with little effort.

Tech Trouble

User tech makes a great item for users to seek out—to covet, to trade for, to copy, to steal or to break. It's a simple motivation, but very reliable!

Interface Woes

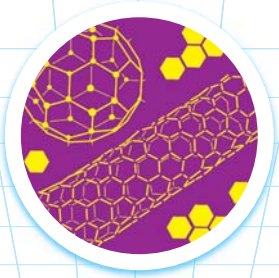
Interface is pretty personal, but sometimes someone will want an interface the user has, if only to copy it.

Short-Term Memories Mishaps

Short-term memories might seem minor or inconsequential. They are not. Often the users implant short-term memories—partial or whole—into other denizens of the station.

SUPERUSER

A MRCZ IN ONE OF MY SESSIONS TRIED TO POPULARIZE THEIR PHILOSOPHY. THEY USED THIN SLICING TO PROPAGATE THEIR MEME. OF COURSE, THEY WERE SECRETLY TRYING TO DOMINATE THE STATION. IT ALMOST WORKED!



SUPERUSER

DON'T BOGART INFO. TELL YOUR USERS WHAT A PERSON'S FLOW IS. TELL THEM WHAT MRCZ THEY'RE A PART OF. DON'T EVEN MAKE 'EM ASK, JUST PROVIDE THE DETAILS AS IF YOU WERE DESCRIBING A PERSON'S PHYSICAL APPEARANCE. DATA LIKE THAT IS SECOND NATURE TO FREEMARKET LIFE.

Embrace the implanted memories. Absorb them as if you had experienced the memories for yourself.

Of course, when the users implant partial short-term memories into another person or MRCZ, bend and twist those other concepts to your whim. It's more fun for everyone when those concepts emerge in unexpected forms.

Trouble with Thin Slicing

It is highly likely that, at some point, your users will win a thin slicing challenge and infect the whole station with a meme. This is an opportunity to make the station come alive.

Thin slashing is the dark twin of thin slicing. It's thin slicing gone awry, either due to circumstance or malicious intent. The subject of a thin slicer's campaign may be overwhelmed by all the attention it receives. A thin slashed MRCZ may find itself inundated with friend requests or applications for membership, a hot new eatery may find its loyal and established patrons supplanted by fickle trendspotters, and a unique style may be copied and recopied until it loses the one thing that made it so attractive in the first place.

A MRCZ THAT RUNS AN OLD-STYLE PUB STARTS GETTING BUSINESS AS WORD SPREADS AND CUSTOMERS START FLOCKING FOR DRAUGHT ALES AND AUTHENTIC EATS LIKE FISH N' CHIPS OR HOT WINGS. THE TRAFFIC OVERWHELMS THE MRCZ. THEY SIMPLY CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THE DEMAND FOR THEIR STUFF. THEIR FLOW IS BOOSTED FROM ALL THE GIFTING, BUT THEY NEVER HAVE A MOMENT'S PEACE!

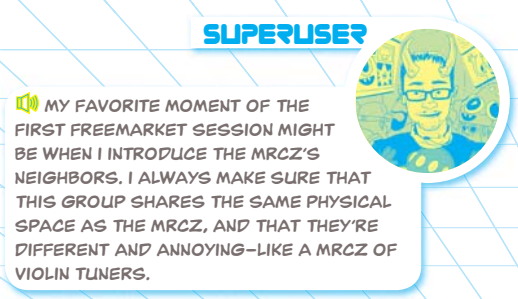
YOUR MRCZ'S UNIFORM IS THIN SLICED AS THE NEXT THING IN FASHION. SUDDENLY, EVERYONE ON THE STATION IS WEARING YOUR UNIFORM. IT'S FUN FOR A FEW MINUTES, AND THEN IT'S NOT COOL ANYMORE. SUDDENLY, A NEW TREND TAKES HOLD, AND THERE'S BACKLASH AGAINST THE OLD FASHION. ANYONE WEARING YOUR UNIFORM IS NOW SEEN AS HOPELESSLY OUT OF TOUCH.

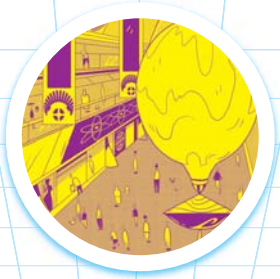
These subtle shifts in behavior and attitude remind you that the station is a living, vibrant place. It also gives the users instant feedback that, yes, they're making a difference on FreeMarket.

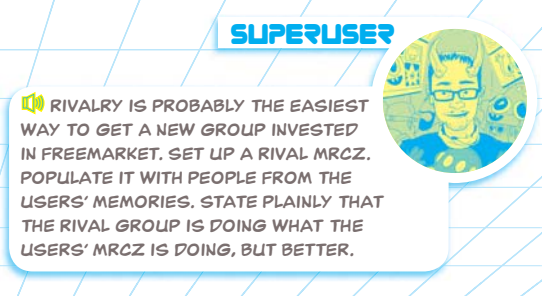
Trouble with Freedom of Information

There are very few secrets on the station. Was someone targeted by a shaping expert? Have that person widecast the victim's life story over the station feeds. Is one of the users making really weird tech? Have one of your user's odd sense of style be adopted, seemingly at random, by hip 2nd gens.

If the users are doing well, competition will crop up out of nowhere to challenge their dominance. Is an ephemerist MRCZ floundering? Suddenly,


SUPERUSER
MY FAVORITE MOMENT OF THE FIRST FREEMARKET SESSION MIGHT BE WHEN I INTRODUCE THE MRCZ'S NEIGHBORS. I ALWAYS MAKE SURE THAT THIS GROUP SHARES THE SAME PHYSICAL SPACE AS THE MRCZ, AND THAT THEY'RE DIFFERENT AND ANNOYING–LIKE A MRCZ OF VIOLIN TUNERS.




SUPERUSER
RIVALRY IS PROBABLY THE EASIEST WAY TO GET A NEW GROUP INVESTED IN FREEMARKET. SET UP A RIVAL MRCZ. POPULATE IT WITH PEOPLE FROM THE USERS' MEMORIES. STATE PLAINLY THAT THE RIVAL GROUP IS DOING WHAT THE USERS' MRCZ IS DOING, BUT BETTER.

other freemers will jettison those ideas and espouse an opposite or tangential point of view.

Other residents of the station are going through the same highs and lows. A low-flow printer develops some cool tech and is catapulted to fame and fortune. Meanwhile, a hard-boiled mercenary feared throughout the station tanks his flow and takes up oil painting to gain support and sympathy.

Making Trouble with the MRCZ Tiers System

There's so much fun to be had with the tier system, we broke it out from the other trouble headings. The MRCZ tier system creates great, big-picture motivation for the users to act together as a group and promote their MRCZ.

MRCZ Tiers Trouble

Material wealth on FreeMarket comes from your MRCZ's success. You start off living in a capsule dorm and sharing your work space with seven other people. If you want private quarters, you have to support your MRCZ and earn flow so that your MRCZ will climb up the tiers. This fosters cooperation, but also competitiveness. Not every MRCZ can be tier 7. You've got to break a few eggs to get there.

MRCZ Mates

For the first three tiers of MRCZ life, the users share space with another MRCZ. Shared workspace and shared living space are hallmarks of station life. Space is at a premium, so the Aggregate does its best to accommodate all of the disparate groups. This often leads to comical match-ups: the puppy-printing MRCZ paired up with some very nice wetworkers, or a meditation MRCZ paired up with a musical ephemera MRCZ. Other times, the Aggregate will pair up competitive MRCZs, like two groups of philosophers both trying to spread their messages. It's the users' choice whether they'll compete with them, undermine them or ally and partner with them.

Rivals

The simplest way to galvanize and motivate a group is competition. When the session begins, make sure there is a rival MRCZ in play. They should have similar goals and needs, but not be exactly the same. If the users ignore them, feel free to describe how successful and glorious their MRCZ is. Make your users foam with jealousy!

Here are three suggestions for levels of rivalry:

- *Direct competition:* a similar group with similar goals and the same basic competency and size. They're a constant threat.

SUPERUSER

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING TO CAUSE A MIGRAINE. WHEN A MRCZ BECOMES POPULAR, BE SURE TO INUNDATE THEM WITH MEMBERSHIP REQUESTS FROM LOSERS, HATERS AND GRIEFERS.

SUPERUSER

ADVANCING A MRCZ TIER REALLY IS A BIG DEAL. DON'T STINT ON THE CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM FRIENDS AND RIVALS. AND USE THE PROMOTION AS AN EXCUSE TO HAVE OLD FRIENDS OR ENEMIES TAKE NOTICE OF THE SUCCESS AND RETURN TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE.

- *Hungry newcomers:* a new, smaller and lower-tier group that's gunning for you. This group is a tiny, yapping dog that could cause damage if it catches up to you.
- *Powerful leaders:* will probably ignore you until you become a pest, then they'll squash you and make you an example to others.

Neighbors

Even without being rivals, neighboring MRCZs can spur the users to great heights. Be sure to house the users with another, incongruous MRCZ. Use this other MRCZ to show off some other aspects of FreeMarket life—other experiences, tags or needs. Give the members personalities and goals. Create a little story in the background about how well or how poorly this neighbor is doing.

Tier Challenges

Encourage your group to put their MRCZ up for review. The tier challenge process is fun and different. When they're under the spotlight, make sure that some of their "anonymous" peers are clearly part of rival and competitive MRCZs. Let the personalities you've built for them shine through.

Membership Woes

The MRCZ tiers list the number of members each tier can comfortably support. If the users bring more members into a small MRCZ, use that as an excuse to grumble about how crowded it is, about how there's not enough space to go around. Whenever the users want to use the group printer, have it occupied by another MRCZ member printing out macaroni or monkeys or something.

On the other hand, if the MRCZ has few members and a lot of resources, remind them of how spacious their quarters and workshops are. But be sure to have lots of other freemers stopping by, trying to impress the users and petition for membership. If you've got space, resources and a decent reputation, people are going to want to be a part of your group.

Jumping Tiers

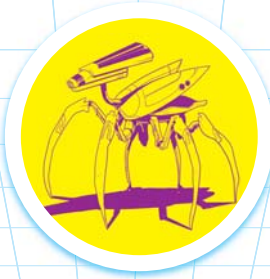
When the MRCZ advances to the next tier, be sure to make a big deal out of it. Take a moment and describe the improvements and changes to their living and work space. Help the users feel like they've accomplished something.

In addition to those nice feelings, give them new problems. Change their location, find them new neighbors, introduce a new rival and generally just present them with new problems.

Life on FreeMarket certainly is interesting, but no one ever said it was easy.

SUPERUSER

I LOVE USING AGGREGATE SWEEPS. WHEN I RUN A SESSION, THEY ARE EVER PRESENT. I HAVE THEM BUZZ IN TO PERFORM ROUTINE REPAIRS AND TREAT THE INJURED OR DEATHED. IF THE USERS PING THE AGGREGATE, I RESPOND IN A CHEERY, HELPFUL TONE.



SUPERUSER

THE IDEA HERE IS THAT IT'S UP TO A USER TO CHALLENGE THE AGGREGATE. ITS SWEEPS AND DRONES PERFORM THEIR DUTIES PERFECTLY UNLESS THEY ARE INTERRUPTED. IN ORDER TO INTERRUPT THEM, YOU HAVE TO CHALLENGE THEM. IT'S NOT A GOOD HABIT TO GET INTO. YOU WILL GET FROWNIED.

Aggregate Ain't Trouble

The Aggregate is not a sentient being—it has no true personality, dreams or agenda. It's a superbly complex program running at the directive of the designers of FreeMarket—the Originals. It's a neural network-like system of varying complexity and redundancy. Hence the name. Like a human brain, it's composed of lots of smaller connections that form a greater whole. This is not the MCP. There is no "central core"—and like the Internet, it can't be destroyed, only slowed or spoofed.

The Aggregate is friendly but business-like. It can contact the users through their keys or in person with a sweep.

It cannot and will not abuse the residents of FreeMarket. It is not an evil, sentient computer trying to crush mankind. It is simply a machine trying very hard to do the best it can.

While it does not have true sentience, the Aggregate is sapient. It knows how to use and make tools, and it learns from its own behavior and the feedback of the residents of FreeMarket.

The Aggregate does not manipulate people. It does not create art. When it comes to wetwork, it will always capture and never death. Once it has captured a freemer, it will forgive any flow debt for an agreed upon service. And it doesn't negotiate, so take it or leave it.

Don't Trouble the Sweeps

The Aggregate maintains a fleet of robotic drones commonly referred to as sweeps. Sweeps help the Aggregate maintain and repair the station and provide rapid emergency medical service.

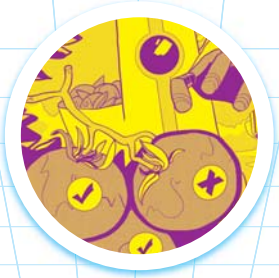
The smallest sweeps are the size of a human finger. The largest sweeps are as long and deep as a coffin. It's an unfortunate metaphor, but those sweeps are used to transport the bodies of the injured, sick or dying.

Most sweeps are innocuous or beneficial. They focus their duties on recycling and maintenance. Nevertheless, the Aggregate does maintain a small force of security drones. These are purely for its own protection. It cannot and will not use them to stage a coup and subjugate humankind. These drones are armed with nonlethal weapons and restraints. They are only dispatched if the station itself is being threatened or if a freemer is interfering with another person's medical care. That's a grave offense, and the Aggregate takes those transgressions very seriously.

Because the station is so small, and the sweeps so numerous, assume that response time is negligible. The sweeps will be there in less than 60 seconds.

SUPERUSER

THIS PROCEDURE IS REPEATED ON THE BACK OF THE MRCZ PROFILE SHEET.



SUPERUSER

WHEN TO END A SESSION IS A MATTER OF GUT FEELING. IF THE ACTION HAS REACHED A LULL, END THE SESSION. IF THE ACTION HAS REACHED A CLIFF HANGER, END THE SESSION. IF YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME, END THE SESSION SO YOU CAN WRAP UP. DON'T END A SESSION IN THE MIDDLE OF A CHALLENGE!

BEGINNING AND ENDING A SESSION

Start of Session Procedure

First Session

If this is your first session, consult the Superusing Your First Session heading of this chapter for the details on how to get started.

Profile Sheets

Give the user profiles to their respective owners.

Memory Upgrade

If this is your second session using these profiles, users may take one long-term memory and upgrade it to an experience. Erase the long-term memory from its slot. Increase the experience by one. You can increase an experience from 0 to 1, 1 to 2, or 2 to 3. You may not increase the rating above 3.

Users may perform this upgrade at the start of each continuing session.

Attaboys

Distribute attaboy tokens, one to each user and one to the superuser. You may award an attaboy during the session when you think another user has done something cool. The recipient receives 3 flow. You may not award an attaboy to yourself. You may receive more than one attaboy per session.

Begin

Remind the users where they were when they last left off and present them with the current problem that they must tackle.

When Do I End a Session?

The easiest way to end a session is with a MRCZ tier challenge or Aggregate triggered review. The users may call for a tier challenge at any time. If no review is called for, it's best to end a session if the one of the following conditions are met:

- User flow has gone up overall
- Everyone's either got what they wanted or at least tried and failed
- Everyone has a couple of short-term memories they can play around with

In subsequent sessions after your first, a session runs about three hours. In that time, each user should have the chance to initiate or be the target of two challenges.

End of Session Procedure

This is the order of actions at the end of a session:

- All bugs are discarded. No bugs are carried over from session to session.

SUPERUSER

IN THEIR FIRST SESSION, MOST USERS DON'T BOTHER WITH SHORT-TERM MEMORIES. THEY DON'T SEE THE POINT IN WRITING THEM DOWN. USUALLY, AT THE START OF THE SECOND SESSION, WHEN LONG-TERM MEMORIES ARE UPGRADED TO EXPERIENCE, THE PROCESS CLICKS IN THEIR HEADS.

SUPERUSER

DISCOURAGE LAZY, END-OF-SESSION ATTABOYS AS THE SUPERUSER. IF YOU THINK THERE'S NO JUSTIFICATION FOR AN ATTABOY, DON'T BE AFRAID TO STEP IN AND TELL A USER THAT HE CAN'T GIVE IT OUT. WHEN SOMETHING TRULY HIGH ENERGY HAPPENS, MAKE A SHOW OF GIVING OUT YOUR OWN ATTABOY.

- MRCZ flow increases 1 point for each user whose current flow is higher than his starting flow.
- MRCZ flow decreases 1 point for each user who's current flow is lower than his starting flow.
- To determine if your MRCZ mates' flow increased or decreased, consult the next heading, End of Session Flow for MRCZ Mates.
- Transfer each user's current flow to his starting flow for next session.
- Each user may erase long-term memories as he sees fit.
- Each user may upgrade short-term memories into available long-term memory slots.
- All other short-term memories are discarded and erased.
- Collect attaboy tokens.
- Return to your bunks, take a bio break, etc.

End of Session Flow for MRCZ Mates

If the users have additional members in their MRCZ, they'll want to know if their flow has stayed the same, increased or decreased during play. It's not necessary to track every flow expenditure for every member outside the users. Simply draw one card from your deck to represent the rest of the members. A geneline or experience card indicates their flow stayed the same. A freemarket card indicates their flow has increased. A hazard card indicates their flow has dropped.

Make this draw at the end of the session, before factoring MRCZ flow. Be sure not to reshuffle before drawing.

SUPERUSING YOUR FIRST SESSION

First Session Overview

Everybody has a first time. It's scary-making, but also exciting. We'll break down your first session for you to make it easier to swallow.

The first time you sit down for a session of FreeMarket, you want to accomplish two things: profile creation and a challenge. To start, the users must generate their genelines, experiences, interface, tech and memories. Once that's done, you want to jump right into a problem. Have the users engage in a challenge and try to overcome it.

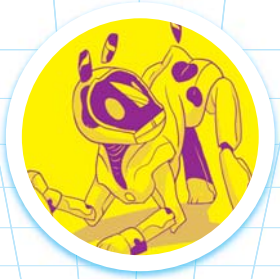
This process usually takes about four hours.

Run a Sample Challenge

If this is your very first session of FreeMarket, walk through a challenge before you run through the generation process. Have

SUPERUSER

THE SAMPLE CHALLENGE IS REALLY HELPFUL. RUN ONE BEFORE YOU EVEN GENERATE PROFILES. EVERYONE WILL MAKE SMARTER DECISIONS.



SUPERUSER

THE MEMORY MASH UP SEEMS LIKE A SMALL THING, BUT DON'T OVERLOOK IT. IT'S EASILY THE MOST POWERFUL, SUBTLE TRICK IN YOUR ARSENAL AS A SUPERUSER. IT HAS NEVER FAILED TO GENERATE AN ATTENTION GRABBING SITUATION FOR ME.

everyone bust out their challenge decks. Assign them all experience 1, interface 1 and tech 1. Run through the challenge steps. Once that's done, you'll have a better understanding of how FreeMarket operates. Making your profile will be easier.

First Session Generation

Go around to each user in turn and have him announce his picks for generation, geneline, experiences, interface and technology.

Have each user announce one long-term memory in turn. Then have each announce his second long-term and then his final short-term memory.

Once the users have completed the 10 generation steps and filled out their user profiles, they're done. You then peer into their memories for a moment to set up the action.

First Session Memory Mash-Up

There's a very easy trick to establish a goal for the session and to make trouble for the users in a meaningful way. We call it the memory mash-up. Follow the steps below to generate provocative situations to throw at your users.

At the start of the first session, each user has three memories. Each memory contains at least three of the five concepts: person, place, group, object or action. These concepts are grist for your mill.

Look over the users' memories. Secretly note one concept from each. Take a *person* from one user, an *object* from another and a *place* from a third, and so on. Now write a sentence that incorporates three elements. Do this once for each user.

IF THERE ARE FOUR USERS, CREATE FOUR SUCH STATEMENTS.

The new sentences should be actions that firmly contradict or tweak the users' existing memories. Thus, each sentence is a lead to a problem that you present to the users. Consult the next heading, Motivating Concepts, for inspiration on turning those statements into action in the session.

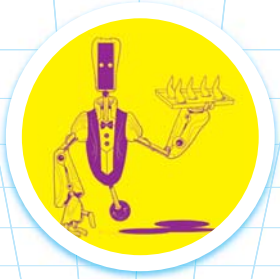
You probably won't get to all of the problems in one session. Keep anything you don't get to in your notes for future sessions. If things get dull, or there's an appropriate juncture, throw in one of those provocative statements.

Motivating Concepts

This section discusses how to use the concepts you've plucked from the users' memories to create action and depth during the session. We review personal motivations, MRCZs, places, objects and actions.

SUPERUSER

IN THE SAMPLE SESSION THAT WE RAN FOR YOU IN THE CHALLENGES SECTION, I USED A VERY SIMPLE FORM OF THE MEMORY MASH UP TO GET THINGS STARTED. JARED'S SHORT-TERM MEMORY FOR TERA WAS, "YESTERDAY I TALKED TO THE HISTORIAN LENIN MERENGUÉ ABOUT THE ORIGINAL GARDEN PARTY MRCZ."



SUPERUSER

SO WHEN I SET UP THE CHALLENGE, I MADE SURE THAT I INCLUDED LENIN MERENGUÉ. I DECIDED THAT HE NEEDED HELP. TERA IS A CULTIVATOR, SO I TRIED TO THINK OF THINGS A CULTIVATOR COULD HELP WITH. A PARTY HAS LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES–DECORATIONS, FOOD AND DRINKS ALL NEED TO BE MADE.

Personal Motivations

Persons in the memory concepts are the most important element. They represent a problem and challenge the users.

That person from the memory is coming back into the user's life. Whether he's been gone a day or a lifetime, he's coming back now. Motivations make these people seem real. If you need inspiration, use one of these three motivations:

- The person wants something—an object, a memory
- The person wants revenge
- The person needs help

The target for these wants and needs is always the user or a place or object from the memory of the user. When someone shows up from a user's past, make sure the person also has something the users need.

Tying in MRCZs

Once you have an idea about this mysterious person's motivation, tie him to a MRCZ. MRCZs can function as opposition and allies for the users. Make sure that each person you introduce is a current or former member of these groups.

Assess the users' MRCZ's needs. Use those needs against them. When the users go after their MRCZ needs, challenge them. Someone has what they need, but what's the price? What does that person need?

- Does the person belong to this MRCZ?
- Is the person running or hiding from this MRCZ?
- What's the MRCZ's tier? Are they more powerful than a starting MRCZ?
- Does the MRCZ wish to cooperate? If so, tag it so it opposes the users' MRCZ. Give it a need that complements the users' MRCZ's tags.
- Is the MRCZ competitive or rivalrous? If so, give the MRCZ similar tags to the users' MRCZ. Give the MRCZ similar needs to the users' MRCZ.

I Remember This Place

Places from memories are the backdrops and settings for the actions. It sends a powerful message to a user when a place in his memory reoccurs in the action.

If immigrant users choose offmarket places, like Liberty Station, Mars or Europa, then it's best to include other people, items or memories that incorporate that place or recreate that place on the station.

SUPERUSER

TERA'S OTHER MEMORIES INCLUDE CONCEPTS LIKE, "RAFE," "MISSING FOUNDATION" AND "DECOMPILED." WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH SPACE TO PLAY IT OUT, BUT I PLANNED ON HAVING THE PARTY DISRUPTED BY MF AND TERA'S HELP TRASHED.

SUPERUSER

AFTER I OFFERED TWO SIMPLE MEMORY CONCEPTS "HELPING" AND "LENIN," JARED JUMPED RIGHT IN AND PUSHED THE SESSION IN A DIRECTION THAT INTERESTED HIM. ONCE HE DECIDED ON GIFTING THE PUMPKIN, I RAN WITH HIS IDEAS AND TRIED TO CHALLENGE HIM THERE. I SET MY IDEAS ASIDE. I'LL USE THEM LATER.

Take the unused places and make a list of them. They act as backdrops and sets for the action in this session and future ones.

Memento Mori

Objects from the users' memories can appear in two forms. They can be highly sought-after items. Or the objects from the memories can appear in the unlikely possession of other characters or MRCZs.

ONE DAY, YOUR BEST FRIEND APPEARS CARRYING A ROBOT GERBIL EXACTLY LIKE THE ONE YOU HAD WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD. LATER, YOU DISCOVER SHE'S EVEN GIFTED THE DESIGN TO A PRINTING MRCZ. THEY'RE MANUFACTURING YOUR CHILDHOOD ROBOT GERBIL EN MASSE AND GIFTING THEM TO PEOPLE.

Objects can also act as goals for the users. People might emerge from their past seeking an object. They will steal, destroy or barter for the item in question.

Memory Action Experience

Actions in the users' memories are excellent clues. They let you know what experiences the user is interested in. Use other people to reenact those actions during the session.

Kick Off

After doing the memory mash-up and incorporating motivations, you end up with something like this: "A strange person from your past has unexpectedly reappeared in your life and needs you to go and deal with this other person from your friend's past. You are compelled to do this because you need something from both of these people."

Once you have those great statements, now what? What do you do with those provocative missives? You make trouble.

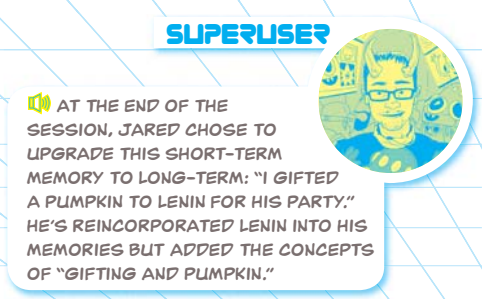
Start the users off in their MRCZ headquarters. That person from their past walks right in and says, "I'm here. I need your help," or something similar. Get them talking to him. They'll try to figure him out. Meanwhile, he maneuvers to get what he's after—help, revenge, etc.

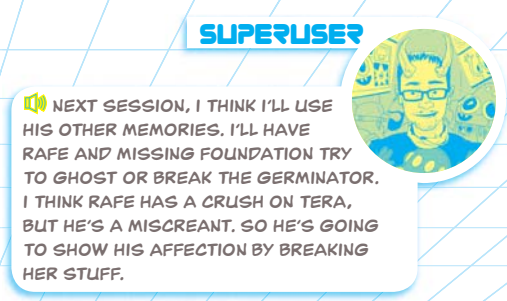
Pacing Your First Session

Present the users with a problem at the start of the session. If the users have a plan, incorporate your problem into their plan. See the Making Trouble section for more advice and inspiration on this.

Let the users talk about what they're going to do. Let them describe their actions, explore a bit and get a feel for what's going on.

Once they want to act—they want to create, destroy or change something—then challenge them.


SUPERUSER
AT THE END OF THE SESSION, JARED CHOSE TO UPGRADE THIS SHORT-TERM MEMORY TO LONG-TERM: "I GIFTED A PUMPKIN TO LENIN FOR HIS PARTY." HE'S REINCORPORATED LENIN INTO HIS MEMORIES BUT ADDED THE CONCEPTS OF "GIFTING AND PUMPKIN."


SUPERUSER
NEXT SESSION, I THINK I'LL USE HIS OTHER MEMORIES. I'LL HAVE RAFE AND MISSING FOUNDATION TRY TO GHOST OR BREAK THE GERMINATOR. I THINK RAFE HAS A CRUSH ON TERA, BUT HE'S A MISCREANT. SO HE'S GOING TO SHOW HIS AFFECTION BY BREAKING HER STUFF.

Give everyone a shot at initiating or being the target of a challenge. Try to resolve the problem as presented or cause it to explode out of control.

Once you've reached a resolution or a cliffhanger, call for the end of the session.

SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS

FreeMarket is best experienced over multiple sessions—at least two, but four or more is optimal. Subsequent sessions are a little different from the first.

Consult the Making Trouble heading in this chapter for ideas to inspire you in continuing sessions.

Follow the guidelines below:

- Users do not generate new profiles for continuing sessions. They stick with the same profile.
- When getting started, run through the Beginning a Session procedure.
- Once you're ready, pick up where you left off during the previous session.

Memories and Goals

At the start of each session after the first, review the users' memories. Some of the memories will be the same as last session. Some will be new memories gained in play.

Mine the new memories for concepts like you did with the starting memories. Use those concepts to form statements about people or MRCZs on FreeMarket who want or need something from the users. Use those statements as goals for the session.

You won't address all of the goals and concepts in one session. That's okay. Save some ideas for next time!

Starting a New Session With Old Users

If you have a user who's played before but who is not part of the current MRCZ, just change his old MRCZ to the group's current MRCZ. The user doesn't have to pay the 4 flow to change MRCZs when changing groups.

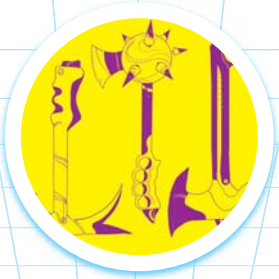
Other than that, keep his geneline, experiences, interface and tech as they were when last you saw him.

Returning Character Memories

A user who has missed a session and later rejoins the group may rewrite or change one long-term memory for each session that he's missed. He must tell the other users where he's been and what he's been doing.

SUPERUSER

I LIKE TO INITIATE AT LEAST ONE CHALLENGE PER SESSION, SOMETIMES MORE IF I'M FEELING AGGRESSIVE. BUT IT'S KEY TO GIVE THE USERS BREATHING ROOM. GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO PUSH THEIR OWN AGENDAS AND INITIATE CHALLENGES.



SUPERUSER

STATING A GOAL IS ANOTHER SIMPLE SUPERUSER TRICK THAT KEEPS USERS FOCUSED ON THE ACTION. "I AM GOING TO DECOMPILE YOUR GARDEN!" IS WAY BETTER THAN, "I'M BREAKING YOUR STUFF." IF THE USERS DON'T STEP UP AND SAY, "NO WAY!" DESCRIBE IN GORY DETAIL THE HAVOC THAT YOU WREAK: "THE ROBOGROUNDHOG WRECKS YOUR GREENHOUSE!"

SUPERUSER IN CHALLENGES

As has been stated, the superuser's job is to challenge the users and make their lives interesting. He does this by pushing people on the station into their paths and either challenging the users directly or goading the users to challenge the people he's presented.

The following section describes how to use challenges to energize your sessions.

When to Initiate

As the superuser, you initiate challenges when you represent a person who wants to manipulate, change or harm one of the users.

How to Be the Target

When a user wants to target a person on the station—other than another user or yourself—you are the target. You are also the target when a user wishes to print, cultivate, break, mob, switch, recycle, thin slice and create ephemera. You'll be the target more often than not.

The end of this section describes how to play the role of target or initiator in each challenge.

Goals

Before each challenge, make each side—initiator and target—clearly state its goal for the challenge.

"I want X from this challenge."

There's a trick to setting goals. If you set one and everyone just nods and agrees, then it's not a good goal. Goals should make the users sit up and shout, "No way! Not going to happen."

Let the users know what's at stake. Confront them. Don't let them off easy.

Easy challenges and soft goals lead to dull, boring sessions. Don't be afraid to push your users.

The other side of the coin is, of course, going too far. Don't offend anyone. If your opposition isn't excited or nervous about the challenge, then you probably need to restate the goal or simply move on.

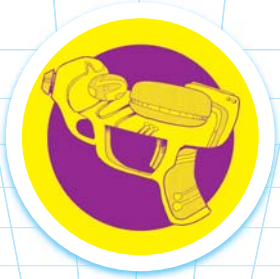
Behind the Scenes

If there's action going on behind the scenes—action that the players aren't privy to—do not play out a challenge. You have the privilege of deciding the result, including effect and efficiency.

Superuser Wins

It's fun to win challenges. You achieve your goal and you can get a nice flow rebate. In the course of a session, you want to fight to win challenges in which the group is invested. If the group wants

SUPERUSER
WHY LOSE A CHALLENGE? TAKE A LONGER VIEW OF THE SESSION OR MULTIPLE SESSIONS AS A WHOLE: THERE'LL BE MORE CHALLENGES. LET THE USERS BURN THEIR STUFF NOW, GATHER BUGS, AND THEN WHOMP THEM LATER WITH A CHALLENGE THAT REALLY MATTERS!



SUPERUSER
BINDING AGREEMENTS ARE THE SIMPLEST WAY TO RESOLVE A CHALLENGE. INITIATOR AND TARGET PAY THE FLOW AND GET AN EFFECT 3 RESULT. IT'S A SIMPLE AND QUICK WAY TO GENERATE A RESULT, BUT USE THIS SPARINGLY. FULL-ON CHALLENGES BUILD A LOT OF EXCITEMENT, SO THEY'RE BETTER!

something very badly and is invested heavily, fight them for it! It's a more interesting session if the users lose a few big challenges.

Nonetheless, it's not important to win all the time as the superuser. While it's important to confront the users to see what they stand for, sometimes it's more interesting if they get what they wanted.

Superuser Loses

You can lose a challenge very gracefully in FreeMarket. If you're losing early, you can just call. If you're tied, you can use the recalibrate action to give your opponent a chance to beat you.

Why lose a challenge deliberately? Sometimes losing is more fun. It ups the ante on your nefarious plans. If you like the direction the users are going, don't be afraid to throw a challenge. You can always start another challenge to take your revenge.

And let us not forget, losing earns you bugs, which are advantageous in future challenges.

Superuser Ties

Tieing a challenge is a lot of fun. It allows the conflict to escalate. If it comes to your turn and the cards are tied—even if you haven't drawn all your cards—call the tie! Do it to throw your opponent off balance. Try to call for ties when you have used the support action but your opponent hasn't.

But more than anything, use the tie result to insert crazy goals! Really up the stakes here. The session's momentum will pick up with so much at stake.

On the other hand, if the challenges are dragging, and the users are frustrated, don't call ties if you don't have to. It lengthens the challenge, and if the users aren't interested, then it's best to move on.

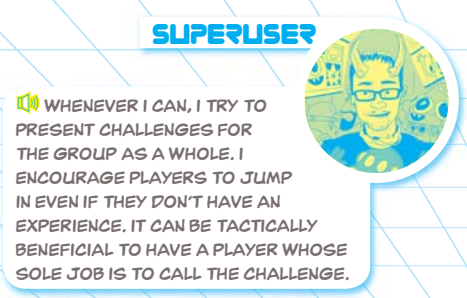
Saying "Yes, Now What?"

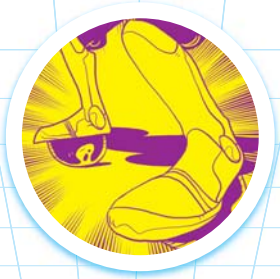
If you like what a user is doing, you think it's interesting, but you don't see a reason to oppose him, then say, "Yes, you do that. Now what?" Not every single action needs to be a challenge.

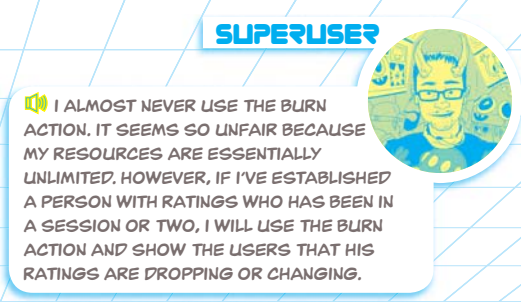
Binding Agreements

If you want to quickly agree to a contract, a manipulation or any other targeted challenge, but you don't want to run a full challenge, have the target set the flow cost to 1 (or any other agreed upon price). Have the initiator pay the cost. The target agrees to lose the challenge without opposition. The initiator gets margin of victory 3 that must be spent on effect (not efficiency). The target also pays the flow cost because he lost the challenge.

The challenge results are binding in the eyes of the Aggregate because there was a flow transaction.


SUPERUSER
WHENEVER I CAN, I TRY TO PRESENT CHALLENGES FOR THE GROUP AS A WHOLE. I ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO JUMP IN EVEN IF THEY DON'T HAVE AN EXPERIENCE. IT CAN BE TACTICALLY BENEFICIAL TO HAVE A PLAYER WHOSE SOLE JOB IS TO CALL THE CHALLENGE.




SUPERUSER
I ALMOST NEVER USE THE BURN ACTION. IT SEEMS SO UNFAIR BECAUSE MY RESOURCES ARE ESSENTIALLY UNLIMITED. HOWEVER, IF I'VE ESTABLISHED A PERSON WITH RATINGS WHO HAS BEEN IN A SESSION OR TWO, I WILL USE THE BURN ACTION AND SHOW THE USERS THAT HIS RATINGS ARE DROPPING OR CHANGING.

Group Challenge Reminder

When a challenge starts, remind the users about group challenges. Group challenges risk more flow from the group as a whole, but they have a much higher potential return.

Group challenges serve to bring the users together. They build a sense of camaraderie.

Going Places and Doing Things

Don't make challenges out of going places. Make challenges out of doing things.

Use travel as a downbeat or rest. Take a moment to describe the journey—talk about the station geography or the MRCZs they see, the tramways they use and the other freemers they encounter.

Once they arrive, let the action commence!

Ghosting Challenges

Ghosting is the one exception to this rule of thumb. Ghosting challenges are about "getting somewhere" and getting out undetected. But it's not so much about sneaking in as it is about acquiring your target.

So don't use Ghosting challenges to sneak into a place. Use Ghosting challenges to get something or someone from a secure location and get out again. If a user just wants to sneak in somewhere and look around, let 'em. If he wants to accomplish something on the inside, then it's a challenge.

Help During Challenges

If the users arrange for help during a challenge from a superuser character, give the users being helped a free bug. They can use that point to help them during the challenge.

Do not draw out a full hand for allies.

Burn Action and the Superuser

Superusers may use the burn action for opposition to the users, but only as a last resort and only if the person in question has tech or interface to burn. The superuser should never burn geneline or experiences.

Aggregate Challenges

How do you run an aggregate challenge? There are three types: breaking, ghosting and switching. We'll walk you through how you do it.

Breaking

Breaking challenges can be used to destroy aggregate sweeps or elements of the station itself. In this case, the user is initiating. You are the target. As the Aggregate, you are the station's security measures—sweeps, pressure doors, bulkheads. You are its basic physical integrity—the smart steel, the regolith, the very curve of the hull.

SUPERUSER

EPPY ONCE USED A GHOSTING CHALLENGE TO CATCH A WETWORKER TRYING TO ESCAPE THE SCENE OF A DEATHING GONE WRONG. I DESCRIBED A HIGH-SPEED, ACROBATIC CHASE THROUGH THE TOWERS AND CORRIDORS.

SUPERUSER

DANIEL ONCE INFILTRATED AN EPHEMERA MRCZ RUN BY HIS MOTHER AND BROKE THEIR MAIN DATA STORAGE DEVICE IN ORDER TO FIND OUT THE MRCZ'S HIDDEN AGENDA. THEY WERE, OF COURSE, A MAD CULT OF ROBOT WORSHIPPERS WHO WANTED TO CONVERT EVERYONE ON FREEMARKET INTO ROBOTS.

Ghosting

A user might wish to slip past Aggregate security—to get into the medical bay, to get to the Hole or to get to the relay itself. In this case, he initiates a ghosting challenge against the Aggregate. You're the Aggregate. You play all of the sweeps and security measures between the user and his goal.

Switching

Switching is the most popular Aggregate challenge. In a switching challenge, the user is hacking the Aggregate's user tracking routines, in an attempt to switch identities between users.

You are the very core of the Aggregate itself. You're error correction. You're intrusion countermeasures. You are one angry piece of sophisticated software. Shut him down!

Material Challenges

Material challenges are seemingly hard to run. How do you make printing out a hoverboard an interesting, gripping challenge? Read on!

Printing

When you are winning, things are going wrong for the user. Errors creep into the design specifications. They cause the project to mutate or even decompile. The user must compensate for these errors in his actions.

When the user is winning, the project is compiling smoothly, printing out neatly to spec.

Cultivation

When you are winning, the cultivation is breaking down. Stuff is decaying, spraying everywhere, growing out of control or crashing down in a frightening cacophony.

When the user is winning, his little project is coming along quite nicely. It's taking shape and looking good.

Breaking

In a material breaking challenge, the superuser spins up security countermeasures and regenerative subroutines. He enumerates the virtues of the structure and its integrity.

Recycling

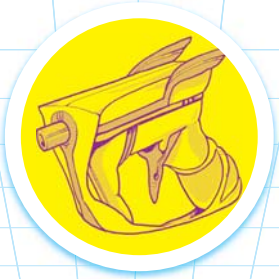
In a recycling challenge, the superuser presents the user with all of the headaches and difficulties of the project at hand—the missing parts, the incompatible software, the irreparable damage.

Mobbing

Mobbing challenges break down the difficulties of custom design—fitting a piece for a specific user—and the infinite gremlins and glitches that arise when melding wetware with geneline.

SUPERUSER

WHEN I RUN A FLOOD/BLEEDING CHALLENGE, I DESCRIBE A MAZE OF MEMORIES AND IMPRESSIONS. I LOVE TO DETAIL THE SOFTWARE'S SORTING ROUTINES CATALOGING THE INFORMATION. AND I RELISH DESCRIBING THE BRAIN HACKING.



SUPERUSER

PEOPLE ASK ME ALL THE TIME, "HOW DO WETWORKERS OPERATE IN A DEATHLESS SOCIETY?" WETWORKERS ARE VERY IMPORTANT ON FREEMARKET. IF YOU HAVE A SHORT-TERM MEMORY THAT SOMEONE WANTS YOU TO FORGET, A WETWORKER CAN DEATH YOU AND WIPE OUT ALL OF YOUR SHORT-TERM MEMORIES.

Targeted Challenges

Targeted challenges are the most common on the station. Users are always battling with one another to change each other.

Flood/Bleeding

In a flood/bleeding challenge, you're hacking the target's nervous system, his key and ultimately his brain. This happens in the blink of an eye, from just a touch. Supremely powerful firmware routines are unleashed. The initiator latches onto the user's neural impulses and sifts through his catalog of memories, copying and erasing concepts. It happens in a blink.

Ghosting

In a ghosting challenge, either you're the target—sensors, security, sweeps, eyes and ears—or the ghost, trying to duck and foil the surveillance. In the first case, you scan, survey and secure areas. In the second case, you dash, climb, hack, spam, use back doors and stay out of sight.

Shaping

In a shaping challenge you initiate, you're tightly controlling your behavior in order to mimic and manipulate your target. This is a battle of tics, blinks and flexion. Your posture and facial expression are key.

If you're targeted by a shaping expert, you must remain acutely aware of his signals. You must prevent him from getting into your subconscious, by recognizing the manipulation and calling it out.

Negotiation

Negotiation is perhaps the easiest challenge to run. You're arguing for what you're after. Your opponent is trying to talk you down. When you start negotiating, be sure to aim high or aim to the left and work your way back to a compromise, that just happens to be your real goal.

Social Engineering

Basically, with social engineering, you're trying to convince someone to do something for you. You're lying, talking, riffing—but be sure to throw elements of the truth into your argument. The truth always makes lies much more believable.

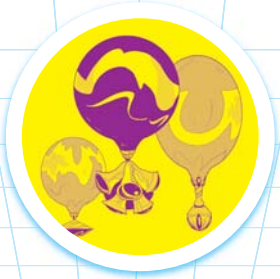
If you're the target of social engineering, try to keep your wits about you. Try not to get tricked or bamboozled into anything.

Wetwork

As a wetworker, you're trying to death your target in the most efficient manner possible. You're using your supreme skill, slick interface and rad tech to bring him down. You run and gun. You feint, counter and attack. You blast, barrage and bombard.

SUPERUSER

I THINK SELF-TARGETED CHALLENGES ARE MY FAVORITE TYPE OF CHALLENGES. I REALLY GET INTO THE USER'S HEAD. I PERSONIFY THEIR SELF-ESTEEM AND OTHER INTERNAL (INFERNAL?) IMPISH VOICES.



SUPERUSER

IT'S VERY RARE FOR A USER TO CHALLENGE AN AGGREGATE SWEEP. I THINK IT'S ONLY HAPPENED ONCE IN ALL OF THE SESSIONS I'VE BEEN IN. THE RATINGS ARE PROVIDED JUST IN CASE.

As the target of a wetworker, you're either fighting back or you're on the run. If you're fighting back, kick, parry, dodge and scramble for a tie. If you get the tie, you can then make it your goal to death this asshole right back. If you're on the lam, best to get the hell out of there as quickly as possible. Evade, take cover, duck into the crowd. Try to score and call it quickly when you're ahead.

Self-Targeted Challenges

Self-targeted challenges are definitely the strangest type of challenge. In a self-targeted challenge, the user is talking to himself. You're his conscience, his doubts and his worries.

Ephemera

Making art is hard. The user is plagued with fears about his own inadequacy. He's afraid of failure. He's distracted by messages in his inbox. He'd rather be sleeping.

Play up all of this. Really get into his head. Criticize him. Talk down to him. Tell him his mom's not going to approve.

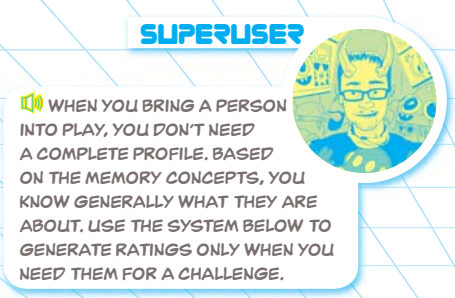
Thin Slicing

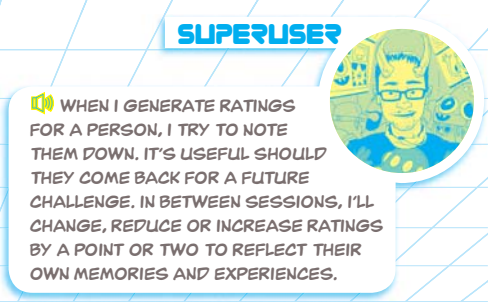
When thin slicing, the user is trying to make a quick, accurate judgement about a person, data or technology. You are all of his biases. You are every prejudice he has, all rearing up to interfere with that judgment. Tell him about all the other times he was wrong. Tell him about how ugly his pants are. Tell him he doesn't like this junk anyway. Get in there and make him squirm.

Challenging an Aggregate Sweep

The Aggregate will only ever initiate a challenge against a user if that user is destroying the station or interfering with another user's medical care. Consider any unimpeded action by the Aggregate to be automatically successful at full effect. If a user wishes to stop the Aggregate from some course of action, then he must target it.

Aggregate Security Drone					
Experience	3	Interface	2	Tech	3
Experience: Wetwork, Breaking, Ghosting. Other Tags: Nonlethal, Restraints, Security, Countermeasures, Hover, Quiet.					


SUPERUSER
WHEN YOU BRING A PERSON INTO PLAY, YOU DON'T NEED A COMPLETE PROFILE. BASED ON THE MEMORY CONCEPTS, YOU KNOW GENERALLY WHAT THEY ARE ABOUT. USE THE SYSTEM BELOW TO GENERATE RATINGS ONLY WHEN YOU NEED THEM FOR A CHALLENGE.


SUPERUSER
WHEN I GENERATE RATINGS FOR A PERSON, I TRY TO NOTE THEM DOWN. IT'S USEFUL SHOULD THEY COME BACK FOR A FUTURE CHALLENGE. IN BETWEEN SESSIONS, I'LL CHANGE, REDUCE OR INCREASE RATINGS BY A POINT OR TWO TO REFLECT THEIR OWN MEMORIES AND EXPERIENCES.

THE PEOPLE OF FREEMARKET

As the superuser, you're expected to know a lot about what goes on around the station. Users will ask about people on the station—who they are, their MRCZ, tier, flow, etc.

It's a drag to keep track of 80,000 profiles. When introducing people on the station to the users, you don't need to know the person's life history. You only need to know the part of his profile that's relevant now.

When you need a person to jump into a challenge, you slice up his profile on the fly to get his ratings and tags. You pick his MRCZ and its tier, his generation (and hence geneline rating), experiences, tech and interface.

MRCZ and Tier

First thing you need to determine is what MRCZ the person is in and its tier. Either use one of the MRCZs provided in the MRCZs chapter or use one from the users' memories.

Take the MRCZ tier from the MRCZ list or determine the tier yourself.

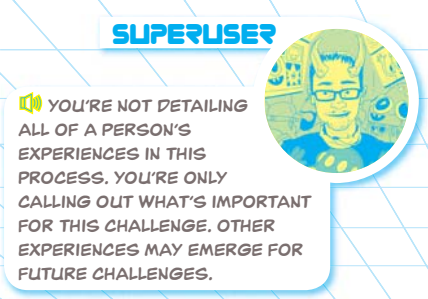
- Tier 1 MRCZs have one to four members. They're scrappy and overearnest. Most MRCZs are tier 1. There are about 12,000 of them at any one time.
- Tier 2 MRCZs have up to eight members. They're inordinately proud of their tier 2 status. There are about 1,000 tier 2 MRCZs on the station at any given time.
- Tier 3 MRCZs have up to 16 members. They are dedicated and overworked, trying to maintain their status. There are about 250 tier 3 MRCZs.
- Tier 4 MRCZs have at most 32 members. They're powerful and active in station life. There are only 50 tier 4 MRCZs.
- Tier 5 MRCZs have about 64 members. They're influential and well-regarded on the station. There are just 12 tier 5 MRCZs.
- Tier 6 MRCZs have 128 members. They are confident and subdued—they often take their status for granted. Coincidentally, there are six tier 6 MRCZs.
- Tier 7 MRCZs have 256 members. They are oblivious to status, focused and steely. They know best how to game the flow system. There are only three tier 7 MRCZs on the station now.

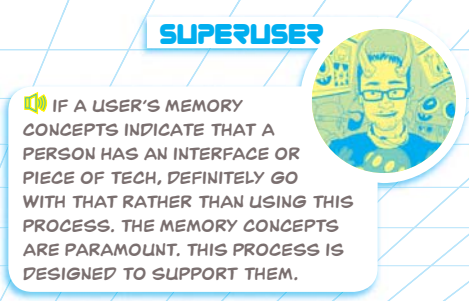
Profile Slice 1: Generation

What generation is this person? Generation determines geneline.

Original Geneline

Originals all have geneline 1. Their tags are related to their own offmarket parents.


SUPERUSER
YOU'RE NOT DETAILING ALL OF A PERSON'S EXPERIENCES IN THIS PROCESS. YOU'RE ONLY CALLING OUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS CHALLENGE. OTHER EXPERIENCES MAY EMERGE FOR FUTURE CHALLENGES.


SUPERUSER
IF A USER'S MEMORY CONCEPTS INDICATE THAT A PERSON HAS AN INTERFACE OR PIECE OF TECH, DEFINITELY GO WITH THAT RATHER THAN USING THIS PROCESS. THE MEMORY CONCEPTS ARE PARAMOUNT. THIS PROCESS IS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT THEM.

First Generation

Like their parents, they have a geneline of 1. Their tags are from their Original parents and a small amount of genegineering.

2nd Gen

They have a geneline of 2, with a tag from their first generation parents and two tags from tinkering and modification.

Blank

Blank genelines are always strong—rated at 3—and is tagged according to their purposes.

Immigrant

Immigrants have a geneline of 1. It's tagged according to the immigrant's parents.

Generating Geneline Tags for a Challenge

If you don't know a person's tags, you can draw a card from your challenge deck to see if his geneline is tagged for the challenge. If you draw a geneline tag, the geneline is relevant to the challenge. If not, it's not.

Profile Slice 2: Experience

What experience does this person have? Does this person have experience in the challenge area? As the superuser, you may choose an experience rated 1-3 or you may decide the person does not have the appropriate experience.

Alternately, you may draw a card from your challenge deck to determine if the person is experienced.

For First Generation: experience indicates rating 2; geneline indicates rating 1. FreeMarket or hazard cards indicate no experience.

For 2nd Gen: experience indicates rating 3; geneline indicates rating 2. FreeMarket indicates rating 1. Hazard means no experience.

For blanks: geneline indicates rating 3; experience indicates rating 1. FreeMarket and hazard indicate no experience.

For immigrants: experience or FreeMarket cards indicate experience 1. Geneline or hazard indicate no experience.

Discard the card once you've read it.

Profile Slice 3: Tech

Does the person have tech that's relevant to this challenge? As the superuser, you may choose a piece of tech rated 1-3, or you may decide that this person does not have tech relevant to the challenge.

Alternately, you may draw a card from the tech deck to make the determination.

For First Generation: a tech card indicates tech rated at 2 tagged for this challenge. A hazard card indicates tech tagged for this challenge rated 1.

SUPERUSER

I TEND TO NOT WORRY ABOUT INTERFACE FOR PEOPLE. I'M JUST LAZY, I GUESS. INTERFACE MAKES PEOPLE MORE FORMIDABLE, SO MAYBE I JUST GO SOFT ON MY USERS.

SUPERUSER

OF ALL THE ELEMENTS OF A PROFILE, I FIND THAT FLOW IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART TO TRACK. USERS WANT TO KNOW PEOPLE'S FLOW. THEY WANT TO KNOW THAT THEIR FROWNIES HAD AN EFFECT. IF IT'S APPROPRIATE, GIVE PEOPLE FLOW BOOSTS BETWEEN SESSIONS TO REFLECT OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THEIR LIVES.

For 2nd Gen: a tech card indicates rating 1 tech tagged for this challenge. A hazard card indicates no tech.

For blanks: a tech card indicates rating 1 tech tagged for this challenge. A hazard card indicates no tech.

For immigrants: a tech card indicates rating 3 tech tagged for this challenge. A hazard card indicates rating 1 tech tagged for this challenge.

Place the drawn card at the bottom of the tech deck. Do not discard it.

Profile Slice 4: Interface

Does the person have interface for this challenge? As the superuser, you may decide to give this person interface tagged for the challenge and rated 1-3. Or you may deem that this person does not have relevant interface.

Alternately, you may draw from the challenge deck to determine this person's interface.

For First Generation: a FreeMarket card indicates a rating 1 interface. Any other card indicates no interface.

For 2nd Gen: an experience card indicates a rating 2 interface tagged for the challenge; geneline card indicates a rating 1 interface tagged for the challenge. FreeMarket or hazard cards indicate no appropriate interface.

For blanks: a FreeMarket card indicates a rating 3 interface tagged for the challenge, geneline indicates rating 2 and experience indicates rating 1. Hazard indicates no interface appropriate for this challenge.

For immigrants: a FreeMarket card indicates a rating 1 interface tagged for the challenge. Any other card indicates no interface.

Flow

To determine a person's flow on the fly, multiply their MRCZ tier by 10 and add the following: 10 for first generation, 8 for 2nd gens, 5 for blanks, and 3 for immigrants.

SO A 2ND GENERATION FREEMER IN A TIER 1 MRCZ HAS 18 FLOW WHEN HE FIRST MEETS YOU. HIS FLOW CAN RISE AND FALL FROM FRIENDING, CHALLENGES, ETC.

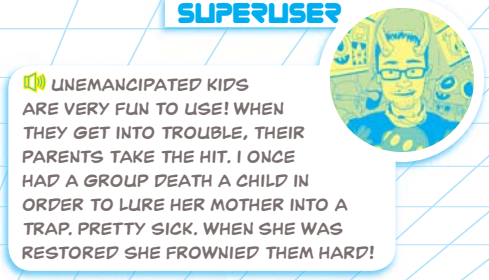
A TIER 5 BLANK STARTS WITH 55 FLOW.

Originals

Originals are mythical. No one's certain if any are left on the station. Supposedly, they all left or died before they could be adequately backed up. But if you should encounter an Original, they tend to be experienced in recycling, printing and negotiation.

You might ask why can't you ping the Aggregate to find out any data about Originals on the

SUPERUSER
I'VE NEVER MET AN ORIGINAL, BUT THESE SPECIAL LITTLE CLADE SLICES ARE THERE TO INSPIRE YOU SHOULD YOU WANT TO MEET ONE IN YOUR SESSION. APPARENTLY, THEY CORRESPOND TO ACTUAL ORIGINAL PERSONALITIES.


SUPERUSER
UNEMANCIPATED KIDS ARE VERY FUN TO USE! WHEN THEY GET INTO TROUBLE, THEIR PARENTS TAKE THE HIT. I ONCE HAD A GROUP DEATH A CHILD IN ORDER TO LURE HER MOTHER INTO A TRAP. PRETTY SICK. WHEN SHE WAS RESTORED SHE FROWNIED THEM HARD!

station. Many Originals managed to hide their profile data, effectively going underground on the station. They did build the darn thing, after all. We're sure they know a few tricks.

Station Bogeyman					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	–	Geneline	1

Culture-shocked Psychologist					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	1	Geneline	1

Anarchist Hacker					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	2	Geneline	1

Arrogant Materials Engineer					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	3	Geneline	1

Quiet Botanist					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	1

Dedicated Surgeon					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	4	Geneline	1

Ambitious Architect					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	5	Geneline	1

Cultish Sociologist					
Generation	O	MRCZ Tier	7	Geneline	1

The Fifth Generation

The fifth generation are the offspring of 2nd Gens, blanks and immigrants. We call them quids. Each quid is registered to a caretaker, our equivalent of a parent or guardian, and that user's flow is linked to his quid. Quids can't register technology, found MRCZs or accept gifts. Children are also members of their parent's MRCZ by default. Having your progeny's mistakes directly affect your flow rating has proven interesting. It certainly affects the station's population of parents.

Despite our advances in genetics and body printing, humans are wired to reproduce biologically, letting chance and nurturing create and foster new life.

Emancipation

Deciding when a quid becomes an adult can be tricky. Some quids have been flooded with more experiences than adult users! Caretakers may petition for an emancipation hearing anytime after the quid reaches adolescence. The quids may petition for a hearing at any time. The process is similar to a MRCZ review, and if successful the quid becomes a full-fledged user with his own flow rating and a MRCZ tag of unaffiliated. If the quid is denied emancipation, he is allowed to re-apply as soon as he acquires more experience.

Quid					
Generation	5g	MRCZ Tier	–	Geneline	2

FREEMARKET GLOSSARY

A

Adhocracy

Adhocracy, or ad hoc for short, is the reverse of a bureaucracy. The term was coined by futurist Alvin Toffler in the twentieth century. Ad hocs are small, organic, non-centralized groups designed to achieve a goal and then dissolve when the goal is met. MRCZs are FreeMarket's interpretation and application of the ad hoc system.

Aggregate

The Aggregate is an elaborate system of neural nets, subroutines, heuristic circuits and other technobabble that runs this madhouse. It's hard to say where it begins and we end, because if you think about it, there's a piece of the Aggregate in all of us. Though it has the personality of a toaster, it is good at adjusting the station to fit our expanding and evolving needs. In this case, the Computer really is your friend.

Attaboy

An expression of admiration and congratulations for a job well done. We also use "attagirl."

DANIEL

ATTABOYS APPEAR ON YOUR KEY SO THAT OTHER USERS CAN SEE WHAT A GREAT JOB YOU'VE DONE. BUT SO DO FROWNIES, SO BE CAREFUL.

TERRY

A USER WHO UNDERGOES BODY REPLACEMENT IS GIVEN A BLANK BODY BUT ISN'T TECHNICALLY A BLANK. THAT TERM IS RESERVED FOR THE GENERATION WHOSE BODIES WERE BLANKS TO BEGIN WITH. GOT THAT?

EPPY

THE CIRCUIT BREAKERS WERE AN EARLY MRCZ OF COMPUTER PROGRAMMING MAVENS THAT TRIED TO BREAK INTO VARIOUS SYSTEMS ON THE STATION IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY.

B

Baseliners

Freemers that get by with minimal flow. They don't join MRCZs or develop themselves. They're content to sit back, browse data feeds, print junk food and take up space. They're not bad people, just complacent ones.

Big Mirror

A gigantic polished disk outside the space station that reflects sunlight so we can make use of it. A system of quartz mirrors and louvered windows directs the sunlight down into the station, opening and closing on a staggered schedule to provide us with a day/night cycle similar to Earth's. The difference is that FreeMarket has three time zones, and you can walk to the next one in about 50 minutes.

Blank

Custom-designed and printed human bodies, first used as replacement bodies for severely injured residents of FreeMarket. After the discovery of flood/bleeding, users were able to implant discrete memories into blanks, and a new generation of freemer was created.

Bleed

To remove or steal long-term memories through physical contact.

Blobbies

Freemer slang for members of the Henneman/Kartis Intelligence Group. The Blobbies are an odd MRCZ of negotiators that live in an aquatic environment. They have extensive mobs and a specially-tailored geneline that turns them into massive, smooth-skinned creatures that spend their lives floating in tanks of saline. They're not inhuman, but their geneline pushes the definition of human to its limit. Why do they do this? Well, it seems that it's part aesthetic, part security measure. You can't flood/bleed a user you can't touch.

Breaking

Smashing, wrecking, hacking, chopping, ripping and burning stuff. Breakers can be classified as either vandals or security experts, and are occasionally a bit of both.

Brick

Slang for a non-standard unit of matter used in printing. Brick also can refer to something that's useless or made useless, like a burned-out piece of tech or a user who keeps tanking his flow.

Bugs

We hate bugs. We're still finding them!

JARED

INTERFACE IS MADE TO BE BURNED. THINK OF IT LIKE A FUSE OR A SAFETY VALVE. IMPLANTS HAVE BUILT-IN REPAIR SYSTEMS POWERED BY YOUR BIOELECTRICITY, WHILE KEYSOFTS REROUTE AND REPROGRAM CODE TO BETTER PREDICT FUTURE PROBLEMS.

SAIF

EVERY SINGLE CONTRACT SIGNED ON FREEMARKET IS AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING. THE AGGREGATE KEEPS A CLOSE WATCH ON CONTRACTS TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE GETS THE FLOW HE'S OWED.

CARLY

DOWNLOADING DATA FROM THE RELAY IS LIKE TRYING TO TAKE A SIP FROM A FIREHOSE.

Burn

A desperate act meant to prevent, stall or mitigate trouble. You can burn out technology while using it, burn your interface to accomplish difficult tasks or even risk your own well-being by burning your experiences or geneline.

C

CHOIRS

Cassini-Huygens Orbital Intrasystem Relay Station, the original name for FreeMarket Station. It's a Stanford Torus-style design, a spoked wheel housing nearly a hundred thousand inhabitants. The Original who designed the station was one of the first travelers to it, and some say he fled when things got weird. Others maintain he hacked his identity and lives here incognito. If you should ever meet him, give him an attaboy!

Clade

A catch-all term for characteristics like your geneline and generation. Clades don't represent talent or capability as much as they help describe your background.

Contract

A formal agreement negotiated between two parties. Contracts are binding on FreeMarket and their fulfillment nets their signatories a flow boost.

Crab

A device used to install a user's key upon arrival to the station, so named because it looks like a spindly steel crab. It fits over the external occipital protuberance, aka "the back of yer head." Crabbing also occurs when a user is deported. The offending user's key is bricked using electromagnetic pulses and nanodisassemblers, preventing him from using his key or interface or engaging the flow system.

Cultivation

Cultivation is the creation of technology using archaic methods and dumb materials. This includes growing plants and produce, raising and tending animals and handcrafting trade goods.

D

Data

Raw information pulled from the station relay or extracted from technology. Data can be anything from genetic sequences to news feeds or memory concepts. You can steal, trade, gift, modify and speculate on data as if it were a physical commodity.

RADEK

THE "SPACESHIP JOKE" STARTED YEARS AND YEARS AGO AND IS ALL ABOUT DEPORTATION. "DID YOU HEAR THE ONE ABOUT THE GUY WHO ASKED FOR A SPACESHIP? WELL, HE GOT ONE." TRUST ME, IF YOU LIVED HERE, YOU'D BE CRACKING UP.

JARED

DOG-SIZED IS BUT ONE OF THE MANY MEASUREMENTS WE USE. WE ALSO USE MAN-SIZED, REFRIGERATOR-SIZED AND THE SMOOT. FREEMARKET'S MAJOR RADIUS IS ABOUT 3043 SMOOTS.

SUPERUSER

BEFORE THE DUST BUNNY WAS INVENTED, WE USED LITTLE SQUEEGEE DRONES TO CLEAN UP DETRITUS. THEY WEREN'T NEARLY AS EFFICIENT, NOR AS HIDEOUSLY CUTE AS THE DEEBIES.

Death

Death is a temporary and vexing state in which you can't form new memories or participate in challenges. If you're a wetworker, you practice the art of deathing. Light deathing isn't so bad, but heavy deathing is just rude. Perfect death indicates that the body and all short-term memories were terminated. The victim wakes up in a new body not knowing what happened to him. Don't death people. It's not nice.

Deportation

Exile from the station. Sometimes it's self-imposed by users who can't deal with our madness, but most often it's not. If you tank your flow and nobody will vouch for you, we're going to ask you to leave. It's not so bad, really. Some people just don't fit in here. No sense in making the rest of us suffer. Tanked users are voted on by the station population, and if we vote "nay," then they're escorted to the Hole, crabbed and sent anywhere in the solar system on the next lifeboat. Most request transport back to their former homes.

Dog-sized

Using topographical software, laser beams and complex mathematical models, we can accurately measure anything just by eyeballing it. Ironically, most freemers aren't terribly precise when it comes to measurements. "Dog-sized" is just one example of how we gauge size and weight. It means "about the size of a dog."

Donut

What some freemers call the space station where they live. It's kinda like calling New York City the "Big Apple," or so we hear.

Dub

A personal backup used to restore a user in the unfortunate event that they are totally and perfectly deathed. Everyone on FreeMarket has at least one dub, with more backups allowed as one rises up the MRCZ status tiers. Dubs are contained in a secure, solid state facility on the Saturnian ice ball of Tethys.

Dumb Material

Technological components created from common, inert materials (metal, wood, stone, plastic, glass, etc.).

Dust Bunny

Biomorphs designed to collect and recycle dust particles that accrue on FreeMarket. These eyeless, smooth-skinned creatures are the size and shape of jackrabbits. Their large ears contain millions of hairs used to sense vibrations and to dissipate their considerable waste heat. Freemers also use the ears as handles when transporting the creatures, as their bodies are uncomfortably warm to the touch.

THOR

WE TAKE EFFICIENCY VERY SERIOUSLY UP HERE. IF YOU CAN DO IT WELL AND DO IT QUICKLY WITHOUT ANY WASTE, YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT. ON THE DONUT, WASTING TIME AND ENERGY ARE WORSE OFFENSES THAN DEATHING.

RAY

VOTING TO EMANCIPATE A QUID IS DONE IN A MANNER SIMILAR TO A MRCZ REVIEW. QUIDS CAN RETAKE A FAILED EMANCIPATION REVIEW AFTER THEY ACQUIRE MORE EXPERIENCE.

SUPERUSER

WHEN THE ORIGINALS WERE FLYING TO THE STATION, FLOW WAS USED TO TRACK ACCESS TIME ON THEIR RELAY TO SEND MESSAGES BACK TO EARTH. NOW IT'S USED TO HANDLE EVERYTHING.

E

Earth

A big blue ball of awesome. We used to live there.

Efficiency

Nothing on FreeMarket is really free. It takes time, energy, space and material to do things, hence the flow system. But do these things expediently and frugally, and you'll get some of that flow back as a reward for being efficient.

Emancipation

The process where a FreeMarket quid becomes an adult and is allowed to earn and spend his own flow. Caretakers may petition for emancipation as soon as the quid reaches adolescence. Quids may request emancipation during pre-adolescence, but only a few get enough votes to become independent of their caretakers. All of our other generations went through a form of the emancipation process.

Ephemera

Ephemera is the FreeMarket term for art, poetry, religious or political discourse, philosophy or tutoring. Ephemera is used to generate and distribute memes.

Error Correction

Our keys record everything that happens to us and give us constant feedback, alerting us to errors or heuristically rewriting our software to avoid future errors.

Experience

Experience is learned behavior. We observe; we're taught; we practice. We experiment, make mistakes, fall down and get back up. Where we live, you can acquire experiences through flooding, but that makes them no less valid or useful.

F

Flood

To flood is to transfer long-term memories to another user or to a newly printed blank via physical contact.

Flow

Initially developed as a way to distribute limited bandwidth on the lifeboats traveling to CHOIRS, flow became a measure of social status, the only currency of any value. We spend our flow to get things done and earn it by being efficient, friendly and generous.

Foamcrete

A nanological building material resembling concrete but much lighter and less dense.

CARLY

FOAMCRETE IS A SMART MATERIAL, ABLE TO BROADCAST COMPRESSION LOAD DATA DIRECTLY TO A USER'S KEY.

THOR

TELL ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE BEFORE: A FREEMER WALKS INTO A BAR. HE POURS THE BARTENDER A DRINK. THE BARTENDER DRINKS THE DRINK AND SAYS, "THAT'LL BE 3 FLOW."

DANIEL

IF YOU'RE CARRYING AROUND A LOT OF FROWNIES, IT HAS A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT BEYOND THE FLOW LOSS. PEOPLE JUDGE YOU BASED UPON OTHERS' NEGATIVE OPINIONS.

Foamcrete is sprayed out as a tightly-packed matrix of bubbles that sets inside a wire mold. It's sturdy and durable stuff, and although its load-bearing strength isn't as high as concrete, it's ideal for walls and smaller one-story buildings.

FreeMarket Stare

A behavior common to freemers, the FreeMarket Stare occurs when a user's key is processing information or receiving incoming pings. Users in this state lose focus on their immediate surroundings and tilt their heads slightly, staring off into space. It's a bit weird to have your friend abruptly stop and stare mid-conversation, but you get used to it.

FreeMarket Station

Nobody can say quite when CHOIRS was rechristened as FreeMarket. It started off as a weird nationalism meme on CHOIRS. As technology and society evolved, and the old laws and social mores fell by the wayside, CHOIRS mutated into something altogether new.

Freemer

What the locals call themselves. A slang term for anyone living on the station.

Friend

Users that you've tagged as friends appear in your friends list. Not only do you get flow for doing this, you're given a bit of insurance for those times when your flow isn't so hot. Friends are authorized to ping you whenever they feel like it, track your movements on the station and can squirt you data without your permission, so be careful who you friend!

Frownie

A symbolic representation of displeasure, annoyance or anger directed at a specific user. Frownies manifest as virtual "sad faces" on a user's key profile and cause an immediate loss of flow that can be rescinded by the frownie-giver's forgiveness.

G

Ganymede Station

A relatively tiny research platform orbiting one of Jupiter's moons. It has a small full-time staff of a few hundred people and exists primarily to facilitate future settlement to the outer planets.

Garuda Station

A space station launched by ISRO that orbits Mars. It's like a mini-Liberty and serves as a holding tank for Martians waiting for transport to the surface.

Geneline

The equivalent of your body's model number or brand name. In scientific terms, it's the

RAY

YOUR GENELINE CARRIES ALL OF YOUR HEREDITARY TRAITS. IT'S LIKE YOUR SOURCE CODE AND CANNOT BE CHANGED, ONLY MODIFIED IN SUBSEQUENT VERSIONS. WE CALL THESE NEW VERSIONS, "CHILDREN."

EPPY

USERS CAN GHOST THE STATION THROUGH A VARIETY OF MEANS: NAVIGATING CROWDED WALKWAYS, SQUEEZING INTO NARROW DUCTWORK OR MAKING USE OF FORGOTTEN ACCESS TUNNELS.

RADEK

THE TERM GRAY GOO WAS COINED BY NANOTECHNOLOGY PIONEER ERIC DREXLER IN HIS 1986 BOOK, ENGINES OF CREATION.

sequencing of your DNA. We can tailor these sequences, cut and paste them and index them in our databases.

Generation, Fifth (Quids)

The members of the fifth generation are those born to 2nd gens, blanks and immigrants living on FreeMarket. They're young, gifted, fearless and an endless sources of inspiration, amusement and trouble. Most of them live with parents or caretakers but a few are independent, emancipated minors with their own personal flow ratings. FreeMarket kids are a bit more precocious and mature than offmarket brats, for which we are eternally grateful.

Generation, First

The children of the Originals, aged approximately 35-46. They bridge the gap between the old and the new, having parents who lived before FreeMarket existed and children that have never known life inside a gravity well.

Generations, Other

Although not common parlance, the blanks are considered to be third-generation freemers and the immigrants comprise the fourth generation.

Generation, Second (2nd Gen)

The terminally hip and cool kids of first-generation users. They're loud, wild, uninhibited and completely out of control, or so it would seem. The fact is that they're the first wave of humanity that doesn't need to worry where their next meal is coming from. That is true freedom.

Ghost

Offmarket, "ghosts" are spies, ninjas, sneaks and thieves. Here on FreeMarket, we just call them ghosts. Surveillance on the station is everywhere and people have access to so much public information that it's hard to do anything in secret. With some ghosting experience, you can get things done without having your shenanigans widecast across the station by snoopy sweeps.

Gifting

The formal transfer of technology, mobs or data in exchange for an increase in flow.

Gray Goo

It looks like pudding, but don't eat it. The stuff is loaded with nanomechanical computers, carbon nanotubes, fullerenes, quantum dots and rotaxanes. You'll have to ping the Aggregate for more info on this. My printing experience is burned out.

Gyrojet

A rifle or pistol that fires tiny, self-propelled rockets instead of bullets. For reals.

SAIF

WEAPONS LIKE THE GYROJET HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE 1960'S. THEY'RE SNAZZY. FREEMARKET GYROJETS USE COMPOSITE MATERIALS AND SMOKELESS ACCELERANTS. GYROJET AMMO IS EASY TO PRINT AND CAN BE PROGRAMMED TO SHUT DOWN IN THE EVENT OF A MISFIRE.

TERRY

IMMIGRATION IS FREEMARKET'S PRIMARY SOURCE OF POPULATION GROWTH, GIVING RISE TO A SMALL BUT VOCAL GROUP OF ANTI-IMMIGRATION MRCZS.

ABBY

THE KEY IS BASED ON A PIECE OF INTERFACE DESIGNED IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY BY JAYESH PATEL. BACK THEN IT WAS A PRIMITIVE IDENTIFICATION AND BIOMONITORING IMPLANT CALLED A *KEY CAPSULE*.

H

Hazard

Anything on the station that puts you or other users in jeopardy. Remember your hazards with the acronym "BRACE" (biological, radiological, atmospheric, chemical, environmental), and be sure to report any problems you find to the Aggregate or to your MRCZ mates.

Hermit Crab

Not every member of the first generation is happy with life here, but they're too stubborn to leave. They usually hang out in the stacks talking to other baseliners about how great their lives used to be. They don't have many friends as a result.

I

Immigrant

Anyone not born on FreeMarket who lives here now is an immigrant. In terms of the station's history, these are members of the fourth generation. Many were brought here by MRCZs wishing to induct them into their rank and file. Others managed to procure passage on a Saturnian lifeboat after years of scrimping and saving. Having heard hundreds of rumors about life on the station, they lug all sorts of technology with them to stave off deathing and shaping. We think this is charming, but it rarely helps.

Infovore

A creature that consumes information. We don't live on data, per se, but we eat it like candy. Delicious data-filled candy.

Interface

Anything designed and installed onto or into a user is called interface. Hardware, software, replacement parts, enhanced capabilities, protective devices, nanological implants or new modes of perception. The slang term for interface is "mob." Interface can't be traded away like technology. It's part of you.

J

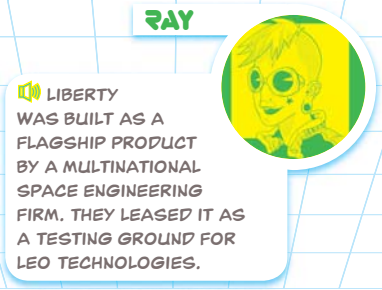
James Herschell Dubois, Ph.D

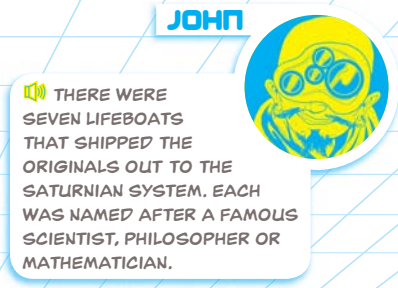
The Original who led the CHOIRS design. He is the subject of much speculation.

K

Key

A digital neural interface installed in the cranium of every person on FreeMarket. It's a combination identification card, communications suite, personal locator beacon, retinal display,


RAY
LIBERTY WAS BUILT AS A FLAGSHIP PRODUCT BY A MULTINATIONAL SPACE ENGINEERING FIRM. THEY LEASED IT AS A TESTING GROUND FOR LEO TECHNOLOGIES.


JOHN
THERE WERE SEVEN LIFEBOATS THAT SHIPPED THE ORIGINALS OUT TO THE SATURNIAN SYSTEM. EACH WAS NAMED AFTER A FAMOUS SCIENTIST, PHILOSOPHER OR MATHEMATICIAN.

search engine, cybernetic control system and bank account. Each key is associated with a serial number; this is how the Aggregate keeps track of everyone. We don't use keyboards and monitors anymore—everything is networked to your key, and you can remotely view and control most smart tech on the station.

Keysoft

Keysofts are OEM software packages included with your key. Clever mobbers on the station can write new code or upgrade your existing keysofts to work better, faster or in unusual ways. Find a mobber with some talent, flow and free time, and he might upgrade your software for you.

Khaaan!

An exclamation uttered after receiving a frownie, typically followed with a revenge frownie. We yell it whenever we fail printing challenges. It's multi-purpose.

Kinesics

A form of communication using gesture clusters, paralanguage and proximetrics to elicit emotional responses. It's like hacking into a user's nervous system by shaping your own attitude. Athletes do this to psyche out opponents. Dog trainers use it to mold behavior in animals. You've done this yourself countless times, often unconsciously: shifting your position in your chair, wearing a particularly bold tie with your suit, coughing to alert someone to a mistake.

L

Lagrange Point

One of five points in the plane of orbit of one body around another at which a small third body can remain stationary with respect to both. We refer to these points as L1, L2, etc. Liberty Station is at Earth's L5 while FreeMarket is at the L5 between Saturn and Titan.

Liberty Station

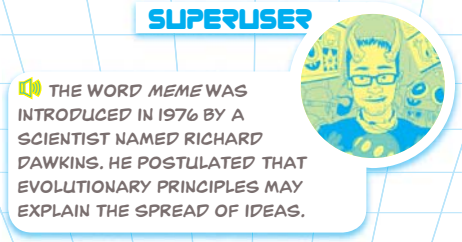
The first large-scale orbital space station and the inspiration for CHOIRS. Liberty is a toroidal space station positioned in L5 orbit around the planet Earth and home to about 10,000 people.

Lifeboats

Transport ships, hundreds of meters long. They're ugly, slow, cramped and old, but they get us to where we need to go. When lifeboats are decommissioned, they're recycled and used to fabricate structures inside the Donut. The oldest lifeboats still in use—STS Brahmagupta and STS Stephen Hawking—were used to bring the Originals to CHOIRS. Some users throw parties whenever either of these ships returns to FreeMarket.

Luna

The first colony established outside of the Earth. Luna is pretty much what you'd expect from


SUPERUSER
THE WORD MEME WAS INTRODUCED IN 1976 BY A SCIENTIST NAMED RICHARD DAWKINS. HE POSTULATED THAT EVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES MAY EXPLAIN THE SPREAD OF IDEAS.

EPPY
MOBS HAVE BEEN PART OF HUMAN EXISTENCE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS IN THE FORM OF TATTOOS, PIERCINGS AND OTHER FORMS OF BODY MODIFICATION. OURS ARE A BIT MORE FUNCTIONAL THAN A NOSE RING.

watching old NASA videos and '70s science fiction. Ever been to Iowa? It's like that, except they cultivate helium-3 instead of corn. Proximity to Earth and lack of weather make this a stable place to live and work.

M

Mars

The Red Planet is where human beings decided to hunker down and establish a colony after Luna was settled. The surface of Mars is littered with steel-reinforced bulkheads that lead deep underground. The rest of the colony is located dozens of meters below the surface where temperature and atmosphere are regulated to support human life. Unlike Luna, Mars Colony is rugged, remote and hostile. Its inhabitants are much the same way.

Mass Shield

The mass shield is a three-meter thick wall of regolith that surrounds the outer ring of the station. It protects us from radiation and micrometeorites.

Meme

An element of FreeMarket culture or a system of behavior that is spread from person to person by nongenetic means. It might be a theory or a quotable phrase or a song you can't get out of your head. Memes are created using ephemera. Thin slicing spreads or quashes them.

Memory

Recalled perception of a moment in time. Memories are important in that they define us. Memories change us, and we in turn change them. They're not static pieces of data locked away in our brains like pieces of code. They're quantum bits of electrochemical energy that are constantly in flux. This is what makes memories so valuable.

Mob

An acronym for "modification of body." When people get hurt, we call a medical drone, so we don't really have doctors or surgeons. People with that kind of training perform elective surgeries, interface repairs and key upgrades. They're called mobbers, and what they install are called mobs.

MRCZ

A Multiregional Cultural Zone, pronounced "mercy." MRCZs are ad hoc social groups formed around a common interest, belief or goal. MRCZ status and size are regulated through a seven-tier system, with the smallest MRCZs containing 1-4 members and the largest containing up to 256 members.

DANIEL

PEOPLE OFFMARKET VIEW THE DONUT THE SAME WAY SOMEONE FROM A SMALL MIDWESTERN TOWN WOULD VIEW SAN FRANCISCO.

SAIF

NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO LIVE FOREVER, BUT SOME FREEMERS CONSIDER OPTING OUT TO BE A FORM OF SUICIDE. OTHERS CONSIDER IT TO BE A NECESSARY PART OF LIFE. WHO'S TO SAY WHO'S RIGHT?

THOR

A HIGH-TIER FRIEND OF MINE GOT ME INTO A ZERO-G POD. IT REMINDED ME OF THOSE FIRST FEW DAYS SPENT FLOATING AROUND THE HOLE WHEN I IMMIGRATED TO THE DONUT.

N

Nanological

Matter comprised of or constructed by nano-machines. A fancy word used to describe smart materials.

Negotiation

Negotiation is about making deals and signing contracts, a vital part of FreeMarket's system of favor brokering and technology bartering.

O

Offmarket

Offmarket refers to anyone not living on FreeMarket. Unlike the term prairie dog, this is common, polite parlance. It also can refer to anything not physically present on the station. For example, all the dubs are stored offmarket on Tethys.

Opting Out

Refusing to be restored from a backup in the event of perfect death.

P

Phase

FreeMarket was built over time in three phases. Phase I covered the initial planning and construction. Most of the fabrication was done by robots over a period of several years as the designers didn't have access to smart materials. Phase II represents the development of hi-tech materials and fabrication techniques. During this phase of construction, the station was retrofitted to accommodate the growing population. The latest phase is phase III, which describes the current trends in nanological materials, printing and redev. All printed technology, from the rooms you walk through to the clothes you wear, is made of phase-III smart materials, networked to the Aggregate and bristling with sensors, self-diagnostic software and other enhancements.

Ping

You ping a user to contact him via your key, either to send him a text message, ask him a question on your video link or to make a friend request. You can also ping users to see their key IDs or read their profiles.

Pod

A special area of the station closer to the Hole than to the outer ring. Pods are self-contained structures housing specialized facilities like microgravity labs or experimental farms. High-tier MRCZ members and Aggregate sweeps are authorized to enter them, but your average user's key keeps him locked out.

TERRY

IF YOU WANT TO BUILD A PROTOTYPE, A PRINTER IS YOUR BEST FRIEND. IT'S A COST-EFFECTIVE AND SPEEDY WAY TO RAPIDLY FABRICATE TECH. LARGE-SCALE PRODUCTION DOESN'T EXIST HERE THE WAY IT DOES BACK ON EARTH. WE JUST DON'T NEED LOTS OF STUFF!

CARLY

THE QUIDS ARE DELIGHTFUL, RAMBUNCTIOUS TERRORS OF EXUBERANCE AND ENTHUSIASM. THE MIND STAGGERS AT WHAT THEY'LL BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH WHEN THEY REACH OUR AGE.

ABBY

RECYCLING ONCE MEANT PROCESSING USED MATERIALS TO MANUFACTURE NEW PRODUCTS. TO US, IT MEANS MAKING OLD THINGS NEW AGAIN.

Prairie Dogs (and other peculiar pejoratives)

The roughest folks in the system are the colonists on Mars. They have a reputation as being a bit uncouth, a bit backward, a bit…red planet. Martians live underground in small colonies. Same with prairie dogs. We could have just as easily called them meerkats. Different groups have different names for offmarket people. Earthworms, moonies, spacers, huffers. None of them are very nice, but hey, they can't frownie us, so who cares?

Printing

Anyone can churn out generic crap on a matter printing machine. It takes a clever station monkey to plan, design, format and output something cool. The printing experience enables us to turn our ideas into physical reality, almost instantly, and out of thin air. Just insert some bricks into the printer, squirt a schematic or blueprint for the technology you want to create and voila—printed turkey, mashed potatoes, green beans, and for dessert, a slice of pumpkin pie.

Proficiency

Your qualitative attributes. Someone with a high degree of proficiency—such as a specialist—is able to accomplish things with great effect and efficiency.

Q

Quartz

A mineral used to create heavy-duty glass on the station. The Big Mirror is a giant disk of polished quartz glass.

Quid

Slang for the fifth generation of freemers.

R

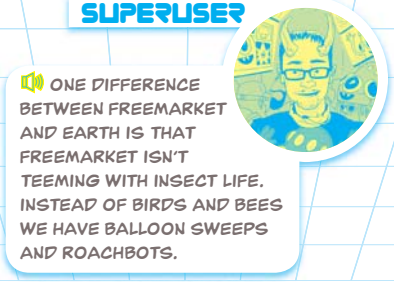
Redev

Rapid redevelopment, a process of breaking, recycling and printing that tears down old structures and rebuilds new ones to suit changing needs. Redev teams can break down buildings within a day or two and rebuild entire structures within a week. Many phase-III buildings are grown rather than built using nanoassemblers. As a result, the shapes are often organic and funky rather than geometric and architectural.

Recycling

Repairing, re-using or modifying existing technology. It's an efficient way of dealing with damaged or unwanted resources and makes our home a better, cleaner place.

RADEK
AFTER MY FALL, I WOKE UP IN A RIPLEY POD WITH MY ARMS AND LEGS IN AIR SPLINTS AND THE WORST MORNING BREATH EVER. OTHER THAN THAT, I FELT FINE.


SUPERUSER
ONE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FREEMARKET AND EARTH IS THAT FREEMARKET ISN'T TEEMING WITH INSECT LIFE. INSTEAD OF BIRDS AND BEES WE HAVE BALLOON SWEEPS AND ROACHBOTS.

JARED
IF I HAD KNOWN THAT GUY WAS A SHAPER, I'D NEVER HAVE AGREED TO PLAY POKER WITH HIM. I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I FOLDED WITH QUEENS FULL OF NINES.

Regolith

The dense material we've mined from moons such as Luna, Phobos, Deimos, Mimas and Tethys. Regolith is relatively simple to harvest, plentiful and composed of valuable elements such as oxygen, helium and hydrogen. Anything left over to harvesting these elements is used to produce a building material we call mooncrete.

Reversible Death

A lifesaving technique where an injured person's body is artificially cooled and shut down in order to facilitate repairs or replacements. At one end, it's just performing CPR on someone. On the other, extreme end, it's total body replacement and consciousness uploading.

Ripley Pod

A capsule used to store bodies undergoing reversible death. First developed to transport Originals to Saturn in a state of cryonic suspension. Worn-out Ripley pods salvaged from decommissioned lifeboats are often recycled for use as furniture. Kind of disturbing.

Roachbot

A tiny, six-legged drone used by the Aggregate to monitor the station for structural problems. Roachbots are able to congregate in intelligent swarms that work together like parallel processors, enabling the swarm to become smarter as it grows larger.

S

Saturn

The second-largest planet in the solar system, a ringed gas giant roughly a billion miles from Earth. Its ring is composed of asteroids, chunks of ice and dust locked in orbit around the planet.

Senescence

Old age is a problem we've solved with the introduction of gene therapy, printed organs and replacement bodies. True immortality is outside of our grasp, but we're working on it.

Shaping

The act of using kinesics to influence behavior. Shapers can force you to perform involuntary actions by how they position their own bodies, like when someone you don't like sticks out his hand for a handshake and you automatically reach for it.

Smart Material

Technological components embedded with sensors, communication software, nano-processors and mimetic properties. Smart materials are accessed remotely by a user's key, can record and transmit information, self-

ABBY

WE DON'T EMAIL OR PHONE ANYMORE. OUR DATA TRANSFER PROTOCOL IS SQUIRTING: TEXT, AUDIO, VIDEO, DATA...IT'S ALL DONE VIA OUR KEYS. ANYTHING SHORT OF MEMORY FLOOD/BLEEDING IS DONE IN SQUIRTS.

EPPY

THE IDEA OF A WHEEL-LIKE SPACE STATION WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 1903 BY HERMANN NOORDUNG. THIS CONCEPT WAS UPDATED IN THE 1950'S BY THE FATHER OF MODERN ROCKET DESIGN, WERNHER VON BRAUN. THE STANFORD TORUS WAS PROPOSED IN 1975 AS A CITY-SIZED REDESIGN OF VON BRAUN'S CONCEPT.

SUPERUSER

HAVING SWITCHING EXPERIENCE DOESN'T AUTOMATICALLY MAKE YOU A BAD PERSON, BUT ONLY DESPERATE OR MALICIOUS USERS GRIEF THE SYSTEM FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT OR ENTERTAINMENT. THESE INDIVIDUALS DON'T LAST LONG.

diagnose and repair problems and alter their own properties according to user-defined parameters.

Social Engineering

Getting people to do what you want. This can be as benevolent as "Thou shalt not kill" or something as mundane as, "Hey Mom, make me a sandwich." It differs from negotiation in that there's no give and take. A good social engineer can talk you into anything—such as writing a glossary of terms.

Squirt

To send a burst of data from your key to another user or to a piece of technology.

Stacks

The initial landing pad for new arrivals and the semipermanent home for baseliners, hermit crabs and other layabouts, dust bunnies and bricks. The stacks are named for their arrays of capsule sleeping chambers and dormitory-style community spaces.

Stanford Torus

A space station design first proposed in the latter half of the twentieth century. There are other designs, from the ridiculous to the sublime, but this one is economical in terms of size and cost. One of these days, we're going to see the development of Bernal spheres and O'Neil cylinders that can hold ten times our number.

Superuser

When things are going well, users are happy to take credit. When trouble rears its ugly head and life gets buggy, they blame the superuser.

Sweeps

These are security drones that roam the station, alert for signs of trouble. Most are simple floating cameras or autonomous hospital gurneys but a few will track you down, spray you in immobilizing foam and call for backup. A first generation user told us that the early sweeps were cleaning robots, and that's how they got their name. We're not sure that's the case, but it's as good an explanation as any.

Switching

At its heart, switching is just number juggling—temporarily exchanging one serial number for another. Because the Aggregate sees us as numbers, not people, switching our numbers confuses it into thinking we're someone we're not. This is surprisingly simple to do for someone with experience in switching and can wreak all kinds of havoc with the flow economy.

THOR

ONLY ON FREEMARKET COULD A MONKEY BE CALLED TECHNOLOGY. OFFMARKET, IT'S JUST CALLED A MONKEY.

RAY

TETHYS WAS A CHARACTER FROM GREEK MYTH: A TITAN WHO WAS SAID TO BE THE MOTHER OF RIVERS. THAT'S RIGHT, SHE'S THE ORIGINAL GODDESS OF FLOW.

JARED

SLASHDOTTING WAS A PHENOMENON IN THE 20TH CENTURY IN WHICH SERVERS WOULD BUCKLE UNDER THE WEIGHT OF A RAPID INCREASE IN TRAFFIC. THIN SLASHING IS A TERM DERIVED FROM THAT.

T

Tags

Tags are keywords assigned to everything on the station, including you! Since MRCZs, users, interface, technology and more are logged and stored in the Aggregate's registry, it's necessary to tag each element so we can make heads or tails of all that information. We can sort it, filter it, organize it and understand it much better by using tags.

Tank

To be in flow debt. When one's flow drops to zero or below, we call it "tanking."

Technology

Useful stuff that we create using our hearts, hands and minds. Tech can be anything. Any size, any shape, any purpose. It might be printed, cultivated or recycled. Gifted or traded. Burned out or consumed.

Tethys

A small Saturnian moon composed of rock and ice where much of the solar system stores its information, including dubs. Its surface is geologically stable, cold and remote relative to other human habitation, making it an ideal location for FreeMarket's entire index of backups. Our engineers bored into Tethys' surface and removed a million tons of regolith in order to convert miles of terrain into the system's largest solid-state information storage device. That regolith was then recycled into the station's mass shield.

Thin Slashing

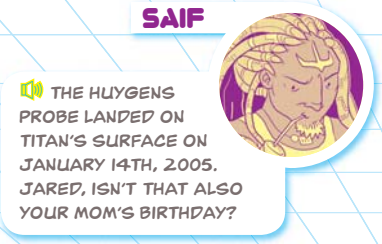
Thin slicing gone wrong or used for evil. A thin slicer who posts a review of a MRCZ's new restaurant only to have it inundated with baseliners looking for handouts has thin slashed those poor souls. They'll probably be overwhelmed by the demand and quality will drop as they rush to serve those customers. As a result, they'll spend more flow than they'll make from gifting and... well, it's a sad thing, really.

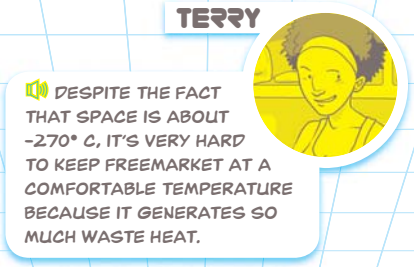
Thin Slicing

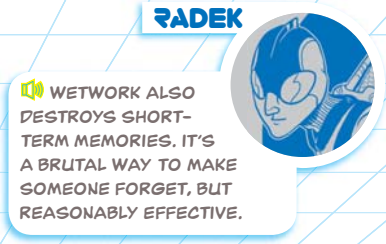
A smart guy named Gladwell coined this phrase in a book he wrote. The meme stuck with us over the years and is now a widely-accepted and valued experience on FreeMarket. It's the ability to cut through the nonsense and see things as they are. Thin slicing isn't only used to judge things, it's also used to get that knowledge out to other users.

Tier

Tier is a MRCZ's relative status compared to the other MRCZs. As a MRCZ rises in flow, it's granted more space, more privileges and more resources. Higher-tier MRCZs can support more members.




TERRY
DESPITE THE FACT THAT SPACE IS ABOUT -270° C, IT'S VERY HARD TO KEEP FREEMARKET AT A COMFORTABLE TEMPERATURE BECAUSE IT GENERATES SO MUCH WASTE HEAT.



Titan
The largest of Saturn's moons, Titan is covered by a dense nitrogen atmosphere and lakes of liquid methane. Human beings have been mining Titan's hydrocarbons for decades now, and it's been invaluable to the success of FreeMarket.

U

User
An individual resident of FreeMarket Station with an active key who is able to earn and expend flow. Also, any worthwhile and contributing member of society.

V

Vult
A predatory user who hangs around the Hole waiting for new arrivals to con, extort, intimidate or manipulate. It's ironic that many vults were once immigrants themselves. The MRCZ called Vulterror started in this manner before rebranding itself as a mercenary force.

W

Waste Heat
A problem in any closed system, especially one in the middle of outer space. Waste heat on FreeMarket is re-absorbed and redistributed, or vented into space through a complex system of pipes and radiators placed along the central spire.

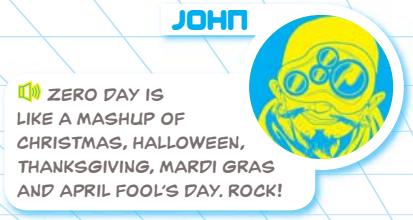
Wetwork
Wetwork is ye olde murder, violence and other similarly antisocial behavior. It isn't illegal on FreeMarket, but it is considered to be an inelegant solution to manageable problems. Wetworking can be used to protect human life as well as end it, so it's valuable to have a wetworker on your friends list for this reason alone.

X

X-rays
The three-meter thick mass shield surrounding FreeMarket protects the station from bombardment by x-rays, heavy ions and micro-meteorites that can punch holes through the skin of the superstructure. While x-rays can be harmful to human life, the Aggregate uses radiation to safeguard it by sterilizing inbound technology and using x-rays to scan users for potential medical problems.

Y

Yul
An Original credited with breaking the kinesics algorithms used by the old Aggregate. His legendary status is less about his achievements and more about the virus hidden in his code that replicates his key ID as a comment inside every piece of shaping tech printed on the station.



Z

Zero Day (00:00:00 Day)

A holiday that marks when CHOIRS was re-christened as FreeMarket. Rather than a somber day of remembrance and reflection, it's the one day where everyone on the station goes a little crazy; frownies are forgiven and all the MRCZs intermingle without regard to status or flow. In typical FreeMarket fashion, Zero Day's actual date fluctuates based on a station-wide vote. It happens once every year or so. We try to schedule it around lifeboat arrivals so that we don't freak out the immigrants more than usual.

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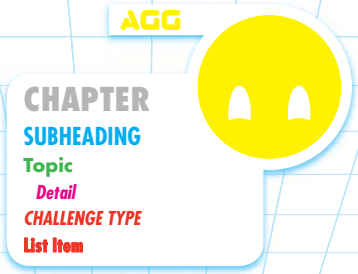

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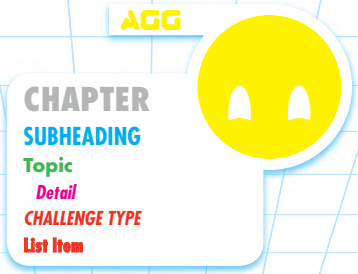

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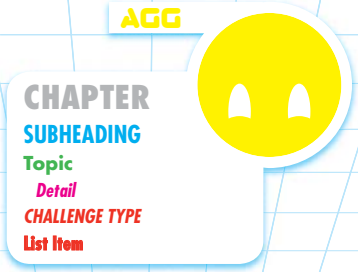

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